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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to be able to publish a response in our correspondence section to an essay published in *Theoria* 71. We hope more readers will record in this way their interest in the material we publish, and so help to establish a pattern of discussion linking one issue of *Theoria* with another. Two essays published in the present issue, those by James Moulder and David Maughan Brown, are expressly intended to contribute to an evolving discussion. It would be disappointing if readers failed to take up these challenges to debate, especially as both authors raise questions which are of central significance to the academic community in this country. It goes without saying that the other essays in this issue also raise questions that should encourage debate.

THE EDITORS

'AFRICANISING' OUR UNIVERSITIES: SOME IDEAS FOR A DEBATE

by JAMES MOULDER

De omnibus dubitandum

KARL MARX

Some philosophers like to play an intellectual version of Russian roulette! That explains why I am prepared to risk shooting myself in the head by exploring the idea of 'Africanising' our universities. My aim is to be brief and brash. I want to try to generate controversy rather than consensus. And I want to try to generate controversy rather than consensus because, like Ian Mitroff and his colleagues (1979:589), I believe that, 'in our culture we are unconsciously trained for compromise or even the avoidance of conflict'. We therefore run the risk of reaching compromise and consensus 'too soon and for the wrong reasons'; for example, because of our inability to tolerate conflict and controversy. This is why Mitroff and his colleagues (1979) have developed a technique called 'assumptional analysis'. Assumptional analysis is simply a technology for strategic problem solving. The basic idea is to proceed to compromise and consensus without avoiding conflict and controversy. Assumptional analysis therefore starts with a stakeholder analysis of the problem that has to be solved. It proceeds to an identification of the assumptions that drive the arguments and the interests of the stakeholders. And it concludes with an attempt to rank-order, negotiate and, finally, accept or reject the assumptions that govern the way in which different stakeholders perceive the problem that has to be solved.

Having used this technology to help organisations create and implement equal opportunity and social responsibility programmes, I believe that it is the best way to tackle the debate on what it means to 'Africanise' our universities. In the meantime, and to illustrate how difficult it is to dig out the assumptions that drive our opinions on problems that are as difficult to define as 'Africanisation' is, I will state my view of the problem as brashly and as controversially as possible. And I will do so because being brash and controversial is actually a win-win strategy: either I get it right, or those who rush in to correct my errors get it right! Therefore, whatever I manage to put into the debate will contribute to the process of arriving at a better idea of what it means to 'Africanise' our universities.

I will begin by asking what 'Africanisation' is; and then I want to put up three proposals for discussion and debate: firstly, that Thomas Kuhn's (1970) theory of how science changes is also a part

of a model for a theory of how organisations change; secondly, that the present experiments in 'Africanising' the predominantly white universities are full of anomalies and therefore on the wrong track; and, finally, that we should try to find the courage to move towards a new paradigm for 'Africanising' our universities.

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The first thing that should be noted about the idea of 'Africanising' our universities is that it is an absurd idea. Nobody has ever contemplated the Anglicisation of Oxford and Cambridge, or the Americanisation of Harvard and Yale, and nobody ever will; these ideas make no sense. But in South Africa the idea of 'Africanising' our universities does make sense; and therefore, paradoxically, it is an absurd idea. And at the bottom of this absurdity there lie all the fundamental injustices of our society. Because we are very good at creating unjust social structures, I must resist the temptation to list what we have managed to achieve in this area. Fortunately, two of our achievements are so gross that they are sufficient to explain why we are puzzling about the problems and prospects of 'Africanising' our universities.

The first and the most fundamental injustice that we have institutionalised and embodied in the deep structures of our universities is this: they are dominated and controlled by those of us who are not classified as black. This point cannot be laboured as much as I would like to. All I can do on this occasion is to underline it by presenting some salient statistics on our students and staff when they are divided into what our masters call 'population groups'.

When university students are divided up in this way by the Department of National Education, the following picture emerges (NATED 02-214 87/07: 14 and 26):

University Students

	african	asian	coloured	white	total
number	61 378	19 177	16 111	151 028	247 694
%	24,8	7,7	6,5	61,0	100,0

When the same source is used to put the people whom our universities employ into these ethnic kraals, then a more complicated picture emerges because of the fact that our universities employ academics, administrators and servants:

University Staff

| | academic | | administrative | | service | |
	no	%	no	%	no	%
african	408	4,6	1 123	11,3	6 031	70,8
asian	238	2,7	571	5,7	285	3,4
coloured	157	1,8	725	7,3	1 868	21,9
white	8 093	90,9	7 521	75,7	334	3,9
total	8 896	100,0	9 940	100,0	8 518	100,0

It is not necessary to spend a lot of time on these two statistical sketches. Their message is loud and it is clear: those of us who are not classified as black have managed to monopolise most of the privileged positions in our universities. This is why, although it sounds absurd, it actually does make sense to explore the possibility of 'Africanising' our universities. And, from this perspective, moving towards 'Africanising' our universities is nothing more, but also nothing less, than moving towards NATED statistics whose proportions reflect the way in which the Population Registration Act classifies us. In other words, if one assumes that the government will succeed in restricting the number of students who are at the universities to the 1987 figures, then this is how the NATED statistics should look in 2000 (the 1987 figures are recorded below the estimated figures for 2000):

	african	asian	coloured	white	total
% population	69,2	3,2	10,3	17,3	100,0
students	171 404	7 926	25 513	42 851	247 694
	61 378	19 177	16 111	151 028	247 694
	+110 026	−11 251	+9 402	−108 177	
academics	6 156	285	916	1 539	8 896
	408	238	157	8 093	8 896
	+5 748	+47	+759	−6 554	
administrators	6 878	318	1 024	1 720	9 940
	1 123	571	725	7 521	9 940
	+5 755	−253	+299	−5 801	
service	5 894	273	877	1 474	8 518
	6 031	285	1 868	334	8 518
	−137	−12	−991	+1 140	

It should be obvious that this portrait of what our universities should look like cannot be painted by 2000. In fact, if it is attainable at all, it will take more decades than I would like to

guess for the composition of the four categories of people who constitute our universities to resemble the composition of our population. All of which is a very gentle way of drawing attention to how unjust and how unjustifiable the present arrangements are from an egalitarian point of view; that is, from a perspective where people believe that the *potential* for academic and administrative success is distributed equally and randomly through 'population groups' by what is sometimes called 'the genetic lottery'. In other words, egalitarians believe that it is political machination rather than genetic inheritance that explains the inequalities which exist in the present position of the people who inhabit our universities. And they need not appeal to the convoluted prose of the New Left to make their point. All that they have to do is to quote some horse sense from Michael O'Dowd: *(Financial Mail,* 4 March 1988:3): 'Approximately 29 % of whites who start secondary school go on to a university, while the figure for blacks is in the order of 4 %, of whom half study through Unisa. If you ask me to believe that the third percentage point of ability in blacks is lower than the thirtieth percentage point in whites, I tell you that I don't believe you. It just can't be true that the bottom whites who enter the university are more able than the top blacks'.

Before someone appeals to Mark Twain to remind me that parading statistics and telling lies are simply two different ways of obscuring the truth, I want to stick my neck out in a different direction. Although from one perspective it is absurd that we must do so, from another perspective it makes sense to talk about 'Africanising' our universities because, if we exclude the servants, then most of the people who populate our universities do not feel totally at home or totally comfortable with the idea that they are Africans; they often want to put in a qualifier and say, for example, that they are 'white Africans' — whatever that means! On the other hand, the majority of South Africans have no problem about thinking of themselves as Africans. As a matter of fact, they don't make a great fuss about being African. After all, what else could they be? Yet for many of us who inhabit the universities, the idea is problematic; we do not feel that our roots are in African soil, or that Africa's culture and Africa's problems should write our agenda.

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Doing philosophy is like running a marathon; before one begins it is wise to dawdle a bit so that one can warm up. Having dawdled over why it is both nonsensical and sensical to ponder the problems and the prospects of 'Africanising' our universities, I want to speed up a bit and jog you through four dimensions of what this process involves.

Firstly, 'Africanising' our universities is about changing the composition of the students, the academics and the administrators. Because of a declining birthrate amongst white South Africans and the politics of what is usually called 'high level manpower provision', both the number and the proportion of black students at white dominated universities have increased steadily since 1980. On the other hand, there has not been a comparable change in the composition of the academics or of the administrators. Among other things, therefore, 'Africanising' our universities is about dealing with the problems that have been generated, and that will continue to be generated, by the fact that the academics and the administrators of our universities are predominantly white. This, of course, is simply another way of saying that 'Africanising' our universities is part of a change in the way in which power and privilege are distributed in our society.

Secondly, 'Africanising' our universities is about changing the syllabus, 'die leerplan', the content of what is taught. The major problem is generated by the fact that, like all young countries, our teaching and learning are dominated by the geriatric cultures of the Northern Hemisphere. For example, most of our textbooks have their origin in these cultures, and therefore they project the parochial problems of that small part of the world on to what we do. In this way students in our universities often come to a better understanding of what is happening in the Northern Hemisphere than of what is happening in their own society. This is neither the time nor the place to list all the examples that could be given; but if you do not know what I am driving at, then a good way to begin to find out is to read what David Beaty and Oren Harari (1987) have to say about how the concepts that are employed in American textbooks on management tend to distort rather than to illuminate what is going on in the South African business environment. The main reason why this occurs is instructive and applies to many other spheres: 'White managers see the workplace as separate from politics. Black workers see it as an extension of apartheid' (Beaty and Harari, 1987:98).

Thirdly, 'Africanising' our universities is about changing the curriculum, the whole way in which learning and teaching is organised. Because many academics have convinced themselves that the procedures of the Ivy League or of Oxbridge are international procedures, they find it difficult to believe that cats are not skinned in the same way all over the world. For example, mathematicians have ignored D.J. van den Berg's (1980) research on the mathematical ability of African students. He discovered that African students do not find mathematics more difficult than white students do. What they find difficult is to learn in the highly individualistic and solitary way in which white academics assume

mathematics should be learned. In other words, in most of our universities being good at learning mathematics in a highly individualistic and solitary way is being equated with being good at mathematics. This is a serious mistake for at least two reasons: firstly, the two concepts are not identical; and, secondly, the first concept is the enemy of the second. This equation occurs because of a funny meaning that many university statements give to the word 'international', a meaning in which it does not apply to universities all over the world but only to an arbitrary set of institutions in the Northern Hemisphere.

Finally, 'Africanising' our universities is about changing the criteria that determine what is an excellent research programme. This is a topic on which some of the pronouncements that come from our universities are useful only as statements that exemplify the more elementary logical fallacies. And the basic fallacy is to assume that research is, if not 'excellent', then at least of 'a high standard', only if it is an attempt to solve a problem that has arisen in the Northern Hemisphere. This assumption, as every mediocre logic students knows, is simply nonsense. The excellence of a research programme lies in the way in which a problem is tackled rather than in the problem itself. It therefore follows that someone who pleads for 'Africanising' our research programmes is not pleading for the lowering of standards; he or she is simply asking that South African academics will give the same careful attention to problems that have their roots and their significance in Africa as, for example, American academics give to problems that have their roots and their significance in America. And because our problems are so much more intractable than America's, *our research will have to be more excellent rather than less excellent than it now is* if it is going to contribute towards the emergence of a less problematic society than the one which we now have.

Although I have done my best to be brief and brash, this has been a long introduction to the idea of 'Africanising' our universities. But there is one more point that must be made and it is this: 'Africanising' our universities is about structural violence, about that sinister violence that is buried in the deep structures and fundamental processes of our political economy. Some academics like to remind me that most African students find many learning assignments more difficult to complete than white students do. I often get angry when I am given that reminder because, like everyone else, I hate being told what is self-evident. Of course this difference exists. And it will exist for a long time. In fact, it is not surprising that it is there. African students are studying in a foreign language. And if Eskom can be trusted, 20 million South Africans do not have electricity in their homes. These two facts — the foreign language and the lack of electricity — point to what I

understand structural violence to be. And the point about this violence is that it leaves scars that run at least as deep as those that are caused by spectacular violence. This is why good will is only a necessary condition for 'Africanising' our universities; what is also required is a great deal of hard work and imaginative experimentation over a long period of time.

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Against this background it is easy to identify the nub of what 'Africanising' our universities is all about: *it is about change*. And the change that is required will have to run very deep if the process is to be successful: into the composition of the students and the staff; into the syllabus; into the curriculum; into the research programme; and, finally, into the fundamental structures of our society. For all these reasons, anyone who wants to understand what it means to 'Africanise' our universities requires a theory of organisational change. I want to recommend one that does not exist! But it can be created by drawing on Thomas Kuhn's (1970) theory about how science changes.

At the heart of his theory there is the idea of a paradigm. A paradigm is simply a set of assumptions; change the set and you change the view. If one changes one's assumptions, a whole new way of looking at things may emerge; and if it does, it releases new insights and new energies. When Copernicus suggested that it was the earth that goes around the sun rather than the sun that goes around the earth he did not actually change anything except the way we see things; but he did set science on a new and extremely creative course. Similarly, if we want to 'Africanise' our universities we will have to adopt a new set of assumptions about what is going on in them.

Kuhn's other seminal idea is the idea of a paradigm shift, of a change from one set of assumptions to another. A change of this kind occurs because of the anomalies that are generated by working with a set of assumptions that seem to be in order but are actually full of tensions and inconsistencies. These tensions and inconsistencies give rise to *ad hoc* solutions; but because they are *ad hoc* they do not address the root of the problem and a period of crisis arises. The only way out of a crisis of this kind is to change one's assumptions, to adopt a paradigm that enables one to get away from *ad hoc* solutions and to settle down to work creatively inside a new framework, a new way of looking at things, a new way of understanding what is happening.

I have, of course, given only a thumbnail sketch of Kuhn's theory about how science changes. And the idea of a paradigm shift is, at best, a necessary condition of change. On the other hand

enough has been said to enable me to try to make two points. The first point that I want to make is that the present paradigm within which we are trying to 'Africanise' our universities has started to generate some very uncomfortable anomalies. The other point that I want to make is more difficult: I want to point towards a new paradigm.

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The present paradigm within which we are trying to 'Africanise' our universities rests on a basic assumption and employs a master strategy. The basic assumption is that South Africa is essentially a First World country with some unfortunate pockets of Third World underdevelopment. The master strategy is called an academic support programme; it is essentially a strategy, or set of strategies, for avoiding organisational change. This strategy is driven by the belief that, by and large, there is nothing problematic about the syllabus or the curriculum of the degrees that are being offered by our universities. What is problematic is that a large number of underprepared students have entered the university; and they are underprepared in the sense that they cannot cope with what it demands of them. What the academic support programme is required to do is to see that these students learn how to cope with what the university demands of them; they (the students) have to change so that it (the university) does not have to change.

Talking about underprepared students, as everyone knows, is a euphemistic way of talking about black students. I therefore want to say something about black students. When they began to trickle into the predominantly white universities in 1980, it was sensible to adopt something like an academic support strategy. One does not change a large institution for the sake of a few individuals. But the trickle has become a steady stream and some people have predicted that a flood is on its way. This is why this paradigm looks more and more anomalous.

Firstly, the country is running out of white students. This is the fourth year that the number of white children who entered sub-A was lower than the year before. At present black matriculants outnumber white matriculants; and the projections agree that in about five years' time the number of white matriculants will decline in real terms. As always, government policy complicates things; this time by trying to get universities to restrict their student numbers to their present levels by decreasing their subsidy. But if universities want to grow, or even not to shrink in size, they will have to increase the number of black students whom they admit. And if this happens, the idea of a group of students who are underprepared and a set of degree structures that are unproblematic will seem more and more anomalous.

Secondly, it is not clear that only black students are underprepared. Among other things of the same kind, an HSRC (1985) investigation has established that a white student with a C aggregate has only a 50 % chance of taking a BA degree in three years. In gambling terms, this means that one cannot predict the performance of this student. From another perspective, a large number of white students take more than the minimum period to graduate. For example, in the UCT Engineering Faculty the average time for completing the four-year degree is 5,5 years. Other faculties and other universities can tell the same story: it is not only black students who are out of their depth; many white students fail to graduate in the minimum amount of time; therefore, as far as I can see, they qualify as underprepared students.

Thirdly, it is simply impossible to find the money to fund the expansion that academic support programmes require. For example, one university recently planned to expand its academic support programmes. In one sense, the plans were modest. But, if one allowed for expansion and inflation over a five-year period, then by 1992 these programmes would have required about 2 % of all the donation money that is available in South Africa for education. This, remember, is the cost of *one* university's academic support programmes; therefore it is sufficient to demonstrate conclusively that the old paradigm cannot work.

In other words, the idea of academic support programmes was imported from America and assumes that South Africa is essentially a First World country with some unfortunate pockets of Third World underdevelopment. Unfortunately, this assumption is simply false. As Clem Sunter (1987:85) has told us: 'South Africa is an average country with an average economy'. In the world economic rankings it goes with Yugoslavia, Mexico, Malaysia, Portugal, Uruguay, Chile and Brazil; 'somewhat in the middle of the pack'. South Africa's GDP is only 0,5 % of the world's GDP; and therefore it simply does not have the money to run American style academic support programmes.

Finally, right from the start, academic support programmes have been caught in a contradiction; the contradiction between the following two beliefs: the belief that the education which DET matriculants receive is vastly inferior to the education which white matriculants receive; and the belief that one needs only about 30 weeks or 450 hours to bridge the gap between the education that DET matriculants receive and the education that white matriculants receive! *I am as much to blame for promoting this absurd set of beliefs as anyone else is; maybe even more to blame than most.* Between 1980 and 1984, first at the University of Natal and then at the University of Cape Town, I spent a lot of time

helping to create and to implement academic support programmes. I did not spot the contradiction between what I believed about how bad the DET education system is and what I believed that an academic support programme can achieve in 30 weeks. Having seen the contradiction, I want to underline its strength with a brash statement: if what is wrong with the DET's system of education can be remedied by an academic support programme that runs for about 450 hours across 30 weeks, then there is not much wrong with the DET's system of education and all our indignant protests and condemnations of its work are unjustified!

If we continue to assume that the syllabus and the curriculum of our degrees are in order as they stand, and therefore that it is the students who must change, or who must be changed, then we are going to generate more and more anomalies and move deeper and deeper into the kind of crisis that many of us feel has already begun to manifest itself in our universities. And, in the end, this crisis will be driven by our refusal to accept that South Africa is not a rich country; as well as by our refusal to accept that what we believe about the DET's system of education contradicts what we believe an academic support programme can do for black students.

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For all these reasons one does not require a great deal of insight to see that our universities require a new paradigm; a new set of assumptions within which they can operate. On the other hand, it does require a great deal of insight, as well as a great deal of imagination, to create the new paradigm that is required. I therefore fear that my paper will be like the apocalypse that T.S. Eliot did not want; things will end, 'not with a bang, but a whimper'. Nevertheless, let me try to point towards a new paradigm by doing what Moses did and listing ten provocative statements.

My first statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will assume that South Africa is essentially a Third World country with some complicated pockets of First World privilege*. The concept of being a Third World country is a complex one that cannot be elucidated both briefly and accurately. It points towards a lack of economic development; and therefore to a lack of basic education, primary health care and housing. It points to a population in which the majority of the people are under the age of 15. It also points to a set of social structures that discourage individual initiative, as well as to an understanding of the world that is based on dramatic or personal ideas about causality, rather than on the mechanistic or impersonal concepts that are enshrined in technology and administration. This, of course, is hardly even a sketch of what it

means to be a Third World country; but it is sufficient to support the claim that South Africa is basically a country of this kind. Most South Africans live in a state of severe economic underdevelopment; they simply lack the basic education, primary health care and housing that is part and parcel of a First World situation. The majority of South Africans are under the age of 15 and the percentage of the population who are this young is growing. Most South Africans have not mastered the mechanistic or impersonal concepts that govern technology and administration. And individual initiative is the last thing that our social structures encourage.

My second statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will not confuse the difference between standards and levels of education*. Many people find this difference difficult to grasp but it really is very easy. It simply trades on the picture of the educational system being like a ladder: Sub-A is the first rung; Standard 10 is the 12th rung; the final year of a BA degree is the 15th rung; and so on. Each rung of the ladder can either meet or fail to meet a particular standard of excellence. Similarly, for each notch or year in the education system: what is offered may be excellent or it may be poor; but the excellence or the poverty of what is offered should not be confused with the level at which it is offered. If all this is clear, then the next step should also be easy to grasp: neither ladders nor education systems are standardized; sometimes the 12th rung of one reaches only as high as the 10th rung of another. In educational terms (as I discovered in 1965) the rung that I had reached by taking a first class honours degree at the University of the Witwatersrand reached only as high as the rung that marked the preliminary examination for the PPE degree at Oxford:

standards in %	levels in steps	Wits	Oxford
25 50 75 100	18		BA final exam
	17		BA
25 50 75 100	16	BA Honours	BA preliminary exam
25 50 75 100	15	BA final exam	A levels
25 50 75 100	14	BA	O levels
25 50 75 100	13	BA	
25 50 75 100	12	matriculation	

The important point to see in all this is that there was nothing wrong with *the standard* of the education that I had received at Wits; it was simply operating at *a lower level* than the education that Oxford offered.

My third statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will accept that they are all trying to operate at too high a level; and therefore that they will have to lower this level without ceasing to strive after excellence.* The University of Zimbabwe has come to terms with this change. The level at which it strives to be excellent is straightforward and realistic: it hopes that the top 2 % of its graduates will be able to pass an Oxbridge entrance examination and go on to take an Oxbridge degree. Unfortunately, most of our universities are not as sensible; they try to operate at an Oxbridge level without having Oxbridge students or Oxbridge resources; and therefore many of the students whom they admit either fail to graduate, or fail to graduate in the minimum period of time.

My fourth statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will take it as self-evident that they should give a much higher priority to being excellent at teaching than to being excellent at research.* And they will see this as self-evident because they will have come to terms with the fact that what the vast majority of South African university students require at this stage of the country's development is an excellent basic undergraduate education.

My fifth statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will not include the idea of academic support programmes.* And these programmes will not be required because academics will accept that, because they have been employed to teach and to research, they have been employed to teach all the students who register for their courses. More specifically, one's contract does not say that one has been employed to teach only those students who have the skills and the knowledge that one would like them to have. It requires one to teach all the students who register for one's course and to give all of them whatever academic help they require. And in place of academic support programmes to help students who have learning problems, the new paradigm for our universities will have programmes to help academics to be better teachers and, in particular, to be better teachers of students who have learning problems.

My sixth statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will insist that academics try to implement their research findings.* One way in which this can be done is to require applications for a research grant to submit a strategy for implementing what they have discovered. A strategy of this kind will include things like workshops for the people who will benefit from the research, adult education classes on the topic of the research and reports on the research findings in the media and in nonacademic journals. In other words, the idea is not to establish a dubious criterion of 'relevant research', whatever that means! The idea is simply to insist that, because research must benefit someone, people who

apply for research grants must specify the beneficiaries of their work, as well as the strategies that they will use to inform the beneficiaries of what has been done on their behalf.

My seventh statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will wrestle with at least two questions that some people may find strange*. On the one hand, the university will try to guarantee that its degree programmes (and especially, but not exclusively, its programmes for students in the Faculties of Arts and Social Science) prepare its alumni for a vocation or a career. On the other hand, the university will try to find ways in which to use its facilities (its classrooms, laboratories and libraries) throughout the day and throughout the year, rather than for only about 50 % of the day and about 60 % of the year. And these questions will be on their agenda because our universities will be determined to be as effective and efficient as possible. and they will strive to improve their effectiveness and efficiency because they will be aware that South Africa is not a rich country and therefore the facilities which its universities have should not be as underutilized as they now are; and its graduates should have more pragmatic lifeskills than they now have.

My eighth statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will accept that primary schooling has a higher claim on government and private sector funding than tertiary education has*. And our universities will support the idea that primary schooling is more important than tertiary education because they will have been convinced by the World Bank's evidence on this question. According to this evidence, primary schooling increases productivity in all sectors of the economy. In addition it has other important socio-economic effects: it reduces fertility; it improves health and nutrition; and, both in individuals and in communities, it promotes significant behavioural and attitudinal changes, changes that help the process of economic development (World Bank Staff Working Paper no. 399, June 1980). In other words, whatever a new paradigm for our universities involves, it must require that a smaller percentage rather than a larger percentage of the education budget be spent on tertiary education.

My ninth statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will operate on a more sophisticated subsidy formula, a formula which recognises that it is not necessary to subsidise every student's university education to the same extent*. Some students are able to cover more of the real cost of their university education than they are at present required to do. Even some students who are classified as black are in this position. In other words, talking about a subsidy is a euphemistic way of talking about a social welfare benefit; about what in our cruder moments we call 'a hand out'. There is nothing wrong with the idea of 'a hand out'; but, as every

theory of social welfare insists, people should not receive more social welfare than they need. And social welfare benefits should be distributed only according to need because, if this does not happen, one wastes the taxpayer's money and one erodes the recipient's initiative, dignity and self-respect.

My final statement is that *a new paradigm for our universities will accept that they are not entitled to as much autonomy as Oxbridge and Ivy League universities are entitled to.* And South African universities are not entitled to as much autonomy as Oxbridge and Ivy League universities are entitled to because they are not private institutions but state institutions; and therefore their academics and administrators are civil servants. Among other things, this means that their academics and administrators are not entitled to a unilateral definition of the new paradigm that is required. Although not everyone whose sweat and schemes generate the wealth, and therefore the taxes, that fund our universities is interested in what they should be doing, anyone who pays tax has a right to a say in the future of our universities. And they have this right simply because they have sweated and schemed to generate whatever money this country has to run universities. In other words, people in the trade unions and people in the chambers of commerce; rural people and urban people; township people and suburban people; people who are illiterate, but hope that their children will be literate, and people who are literate, but fear that their children will be illiterate; all these groups of people, as well as the many to which I cannot refer, have a right to saying what our universities should be like. Inevitably, stakeholders who come from such diverse backgrounds will have very different interests; and therefore they will not find it easy to create a new paradigm for our universities. This does not matter because, at least on ritual occasions, our universities declare that there is no idea that is so sacred that it cannot be doubted and debated. But if this is what our universities believe about how new ideas should be created, then there are two things that they should do. On the one hand, they should declare that our present idea of what a university ought to be like is not sacred; it can be doubted and debated, and by anyone who is a taxpayer. On the other hand, they should invite stakeholders of the kind that I have mentioned to an indaba about what South Africa's universities ought to be like. An indaba of this kind will be as difficult to hold as the political indaba was; but, in the end, it will also be as creative and as innovative as the political indaba has been.

I want to end by returning to what I said at the beginning and affirmed along the way. I am neither an expert nor an authority on how we should 'Africanise' our universities; but it is easy to see that we are on a track that generates anomalies. Because I have

had to be brief, I decided to be brash and provocative as well. At this stage it is more important to state positions sharply, and to debate them thoroughly, than to seek an easy compromise. While I have tried to do all these things along the way, I want to end on another note. A new paradigm for our universities will not regard 'Africanisation' as a problem that only the Council, the Senate or the Executive must worry about, but as an opportunity for all of us who are striving after excellence to demonstrate how intelligent, imaginative and courageous we are. And those of us who are always talking about excellence will have many opportunities to demonstrate how intelligent, imaginative and courageous we are, because talking about 'Africanising' our universities is talking about creating universities that are as rooted in our soil as our favourite foreign institutions are rooted in theirs.

University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.

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REMEMBRANCE OF GENET'S PASSING:
JEAN GENET'S TOMB

by SERGE DOMINIQUE MÉNAGER,
translated by VANESSA SAMWAYS[1]

'Tel qu'en lui-même enfin l'éternité le change'[2]

Jean Genet is probably not as people imagine. An article by Jean Bernard Yehouda Morali,[3] which introduces some new biographical facts about Jean Genet, embarks on an attempt to raise the legendary veil and to expose what is hidden beneath the myth of this thieving prostitute of a writer. Indeed it is likely that Jean Genet has worked cleverly to throw us off the scent; all this to better reinforce a picture of his life imparted to us solely through his novels which can be considered in the main as autobiographical. This image has been still further reinforced by Sartre's analysis of the Mystery of Saint Genet, Actor and Martyr. (The title of this study should be sufficient warning.) Sartre's seal is on it and that is almost irrefutable.

Morocco 1980: absorbed in my research for a paper on the author of *Notre Dame des Fleurs*, I received a letter from a friend living at Larache on the Atlantic coast on the other side of the country. He told me a very strange story. Having noticed several books by Genet in the window of the village bookshop, the desire to page through one of these novels led him to find therein a dedication to the bookseller written in the author's own hand. In the course of conversation he found out that Genet lived there for the majority of the year and that he was there at that particular time. Hardly believing my good luck, I rushed to the small formerly Spanish town of Larache, already dreaming of the possibility of interviewing Monsieur Genet. However, under the spell of the myth and fearful of making some *faux pas* which would permanently scotch my chances of getting an appointment with him, my enthusiasm was dampened and forced me to approach with care — don't frighten the animal!

Upon reflection, it seemed wiser to use the services of an Arab go-between. The North African messenger would most likely be given a welcoming audience, whereas the French researcher would undoubtedly fail. Besides we already had a man on site. My friend knew 'Monsieur Genet's secretary', as the bookshop owner had called him 'Know' is a very grand word: they had come across each other in the cafe and had said hello in the steam bath. So the secretary suggested writing down the questions which I wanted to put to Monsieur Genet, and he would make sure they reached him.

As the writer's mythical refusal to speak was becoming more and

more entrenched, it is easy to imagine how torturous it was to reduce the stream of questions rushing through me to a dozen innocuous items. Fully expecting an unfavourable answer, I wanted to quell my impatience and so decided to go to the creature's den. We left the European sector of the town and made our way to a remote place, perched on the cliff-tops, which in Oranais would have been called the Black Area — ah, such is the power of imagery! The pot holes in the road became more frequent as, beneath a twilight sky, we walked towards a group of mud huts. Genet's house was immediately recognizable, because it was made of concrete with wide windows along its front, whereas the other dilapidated houses were protected from the sun. It was perfectly ugly, perfectly suited to meeting the practical requirements of a fairly well-off North African family! On the right of this dwelling, wretched and ramshackle, rose up the two grimy floors of a building: the prison. Following the boundary behind Genet's house, there was a kind of untended garden; formerly it was the European cemetery for Larache and had since become the favourite playground for children who managed to get in there by scaling the perimeter wall, which had crumbled away in certain places, to go chasing after dogs among the graves. And then, how miraculous, the curtain was drawn back from the window and 'Tel qu'en Lui-même enfin l'éternité le change,'[2] the poet came out of his hovel, preceded by his young secretary: the eternal couple of the Criminal and the Saint.[4] Transfixed beside the path which led only to the prison or to his house, embarrassed at feeling so out of place and imagining their thoughts of 'What the devil can those two stuffed dummies be up to?' racing through my mind, I hardly dared glance at the fragile old man who was looking me up and down, surprised at coming across a European in an area where none of them ever ventured. I immediately considered all my chances of interviewing the author as ruined. What would happen if he were to recognize me during this unlikely meeting? He would feel that he had been watched, spied on and he would refuse to speak.

Prison, house, cemetery: J. B. Y. Morali states at the end of his article that 'Genet becomes Ommou'[5] and, like her acts as the mouthpiece for the revolution. Should one not marvel at this man who has built all his literary work on magnifying and sanctifying the Image, both symbolic and stylistic, on pursuing his quest for perfection to the extreme of remodelling the very appearance of his life to bring it in line with his creative development? Initially he displayed an aggressive desire to cut himself off from all traditional social conventions, living only in hotels and simply using his editor's address. Later, in the greatest secrecy, he decided to buy a house. Of course, the choice of locality was not haphazard. One might have expected him to choose Algeria, as much from

referring to *Les Paravents* as from his attachment to a regime which in the past had not been mean in its support of the Palestinian cause, dear to his own heart. Yet he chose Morocco. It was undoubtedly because the friend for whom he acquired the house, was Moroccan by birth. However, Genet must have been fully aware that his choice would also emphasise his marked preference for troubled regimes led by dictators whose power rests on batallions of seductive torturers.

The town of Larache itself, situated well away from any tourist routes, undoubtedly fulfills the requirements of a peaceful place for living out one's life cut off from all social contact. Also it would be wrong to ignore the existence of a purely material reason behind this choice, the fact that the secretary's family came from that part of Morocco.

And so to the secretary! Can one possibly *not* see a remarkable continuity in the chain of people beginning with Abdallah, his friend fated to end so tragically,[6] including his Algerian lovers mentioned in the interview he gave to *Playboy* magazine in 1964,[7] who had opened his eyes to the justice of the struggle in which FLN[8] members were engaged, and followed by the Palestinian militants, in whose company he was to live during the seventies and whose struggles were later to form the core of the last of his published works.[9]

This succession of people has always stressed his taste for those on the fringe of society, with the Arabs as the last link in a long chain of thieves, procurers, negroes and homosexuals with whom he was associated throughout his life. Buying this house for the secretary resulted from the same ethical consideration which had already prompted Genet to send a young 'beur'[10] to receive the award which the Minister of Culture was to bestow on him: that of turning those rejected by society into his heroes. Moreover, need one emphasize the prison running alongside his house? The triple union of prison, cemetery and Arabian shack is apparently straight out of one of the author's novels. It is basically too good to be true. Over which dead and after which fights did Ommou-Genet come to weep at these tombs? Which captive in love was she spying on through these bars? Which domestic chores was she doing behind these walls?

Is it not strange that this author, who for years obstinately refused to say a word about his work, for him part of a past supposedly over, should continue to match his lifestyle so wholeheartedly to living conditions copied exactly from those which he had previously imposed on the characters of his books? Not content with having set up all the outward appearances of a fabulous cult, affecting the fauna of *Notre Dame des Fleurs* and the other characters of his novels as it did the protagonists of the whole

of his dramatic output, Jean Genet has achieved a perfect enactment of what he wanted us to believe him to be. This is undoubtedly a unique step in the history of French literature, for this writer has distorted the course of his life to make it conform exactly to his artistic ethic. Such an attitude is quite unlike any other: his literary output has breathed life into his physical existence.

So it is that the 'mac bandant',[11] depicted in the last paragraph of *Notre Dame des Fleurs*, traces round his member as it lies on the letter he is writing, in order to draw the profile of his love.[12] Genet inverts this and his sentences sketch for him the outline of the house where he intends to finish his days. The irony of fate is that destiny was not to allow this symbolic residence to be his last dwelling place. Genet's life was to end in March 1986 in an anonymous Parisian hotel room, and not even the one he usually took.[13] Stricken by a heart attack, with the proofs for *Un Captif Amoureux* which he had been corrrecting tossed aside in a corner of the room, he was far from his Moroccan secretary, far from his house in Larache. And yet its purchase was not in vain. The last act of the comedy would not lack in savour, because Genet wanted to be buried in the small cemetery adjoining his property. So he was to find his rest facing the ocean which had inspired him to write *Querelle de Brest* and which had rocked the boats of so many sailors in his novels. He was to be buried near the prison to which he would thus remain for ever attached.

In its wish to honour this artistic creator, the French government could hardly avoid delegating its Consul to escort the writer's remains and to pay him final homage. It is with some amusement that one can picture this high-ranking official going through the hovel to get to the cemetery. (Maybe one should rather imagine that he was made to climb over the partition wall like the little Arabs already mentioned, in the wake of the pall-bearers with coffin aloft. This sight is as colourful and as poetic as the flowers which the delegation of 'folles'[14] laid down in honour of the remains of a demolished urinal.[15]) Imagine, if you will, the Consul paddling through the mud, harassed by the dogs that roam around there in impressive packs, intently observed by the women hidden on their terraces, watched over by Ommou, and thus spied on by Genet himself. The ultimate masquerade, the final trick: the writer has witnessed his own burial which he surely followed with considerable amusement, like the workman who watched the cortege going past as it accompanied Divine to her grave.[16] But the poor Consul must have found it very difficult to match by his presence alone the procession of pimps and homosexuals who escorted the heroine.

Now Genet rests where all Ommous have always finished up, beneath a mound of beaten soil with no ornament save one of those traditional modest headstones which adorn North African graves, in all likelihood made by a local craftsman.

I made my way to Larache during the summer after the writer's demise and my visit was not without success since it enabled me to put the final touch to this last metaphor of Genet's work. Entering the cemetery which cowered beneath the August light, I passed his grave on my way towards the cliff overhanging the sea, when I had the delightful surprise of coming across, displayed on precipitous outcrops and spread out as far as the first of the ocean's waves, a bouquet of rubbish, greasy papers, plastic milk sachets, all sorts of bottles and containers, which together made up a dazzling, rotting wreath, a last tribute laid by the Arab people on the remains of a man who had dedicated to them an undeniable love.

Jean, lost among so many images and masks, child of the Welfare State, thief, homosexual, militant, forever laid to rest beneath Muslim soil: which Crusaders will ever be able to regain the soul of this Saint? It was Genet himself who selected this headstone, from the very granite of blasphemy's black flight.[17] Let one not go to the trouble of desecrating the poet's remains, for they have already been sanctified by his own actions, by that eternal association with prison, trash and betrayal, (for has the Saint not become an Infidel). He has found a way out, a 'device'[18] for avoiding any future confusion.

P.S. One may perhaps wonder about the precise outcome of my meeting with Genet after his secretary had given him the list of questions which I wanted to ask him. For a start, I am not even sure whether he ever saw them. The fact remains that during one of the walks which we used to take through the town streets in pursuit of Genet, spurred on by my friend who was exasperated by my repeated procrastination, I made bold to stand before the writer, from whom I finally asked the favour of an interview. The little old man stopped in his tracks as though panic-stricken, eyes moving frantically in their sockets, searching for a way out. With trembling lips, Genet opened his mouth. In a barely audible voice, he breathed out the whispered words: 'Leave me alone!' Then he escaped realizing that I would not try to stop him forcibly. The best laid plans . . .! I shall never know everything which my passion for Genet inspired me so ardently to ask of him. Only my dreams are left: a wreath laid on his tomb.

University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.

NOTES

1. It is of interest to note that the article was translated in conjunction with the author. This was with the precise aim of attempting to render not only the sense contained therein, but also, equally importantly, in the hope of maintaining the same tenor. Such a co-operative venture is of undeniable value to those in Modern Languages Departments, staff and students alike, as it gives rise to a host of pertinent areas for discussion.
2. A line from Mallarmé's poem 'Le tombeau d'Edgar Poë' translated as, 'At last he is what eternity makes of him.'
3. Article by J.B.Y. Morali, 'Les cinq view de Jean Genet', published by La Société d'Histoire du théâtre in *Revue de l'histoire du théâtre*, 1986.
4. Title of Chapter III, Livre II of Sartre's analysis of Jean Genet: *Saint Genet Comédien et Martyr*.
5. 'Les cinq view de Jean Genet' p. 245. Ommou is the heroine of the play *Les Paravents*.
6. Abdallah, whose father was half Algerian, was Genet's friend during the middle 50s. He committed suicide ten years later.
7. *Play Boy*, translated into French in *Le Magazine Littéraire* O.C. p. 21.
8. The F.L.N., National Liberation Front, was at the forefront of the Algerian conflict.
9. *Un Captif Amoureux*.
10. 'Beur', a young Algerian, son of immigrants, born in France.
11. 'mac bandant', translated as, 'horny pimp'.
12. *Notre Dame des Fleurs* NRF Oeuvres Complètes, Tome 1 p. 207.
13. Cf. Special issue of the daily newspaper *Libération* devoted to Genet's death, which occurred in March 1986.
14. 'Folles', translated as 'queers'.
15. *Journal du voleur* NRF pp. 68, 69.
16. *Notre Dame Des Fleurs* NRF Oeuvres complètes.
17. Inspired by a line from Mallarmé's poem 'Le Tombeau d'Edgar Poë', 'Au noir vol du blaspheme épars dans le futur.'
18. Jean Paul Sartre's expression, *Saint Genet, Comédien et Martyr* Oeuvres complètes NRF Tome I p. 329.

'TROILUS AND CRESSIDA': DECONSTRUCTING THE MIDDLE AGES?

by A.M. POTTER

It should be made clear initially, since the title of this article may well be misleading, that I do not profess to be an expert in the literary theory known as deconstruction, and do not intend to present a detailed analysis of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* in the manner of this particular approach to literature.

What interests me, rather, are the parallels that seem to exist between the attitudes to the currently accepted ideologies by which a nation or civilisation lives at any particular period in its history that evoked the approaches to literature and to cultural values known as deconstruction, and similar attitudes that seem to be built into virtually every aspect of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*.

I do not wish to enter into the controversy surrounding deconstruction, since I am not concerned with the details of the specific approach, but rather with its broad underlying motives, yet some of the terms in which this controversy has been seen are highly illuminating of the point I will be trying to make in this paper, so I will refer briefly to this controversy.

At a time when a new — or still relatively new — approach to literary theory is attempting radically to undermine, or even entirely to depose, a long-established traditional method, opposing camps tend to be established, which exchange attacks which often take the form of extreme vituperation. The latest (at time of writing) edition of *PN Review*,[1] which prints a variety of responses to the new critical theories, is as good a place as any to examine the bitter personal animosities which the current conflicting views of methods of approach to literature can arouse. One such comment interests me in particular, but before I refer to it, I would like to indicate in brief the context in which I think its stance should be seen.

According to Eagleton,[2] the method of looking at cultural activity (in the broadest possible sense of the phrase) known as 'deconstruction', though building on previous theories, was prompted into existence by the disillusionment caused in some French intellectual and academic circles by the failure of the political crisis and student revolt of May 1968 to bring about a radical transformation of French society along the lines they would have liked. Even although De Gaulle was eventually forced into retirement, the old political, social, and economic system maintained its hold on France, despite the fact that, in their eyes, it lacked any moral authority to do so. Disillusioned with the system,

and with the inability of any sort of direct political or social action to dismantle that system, some of these individuals immersed themselves in an intellectual atempt to achieve the result which the May '68 events had failed to do; or, as Eagleton puts it: 'Unable to break the structures of state power, post-structuralism found in (sic) possible instead to subvert the structures of language' (p. 142; presumably 'in' should read 'it'). The result was deconstruction, an attempt intellectually to take one step back from the ideological assumptions that underlie society and see them for what they are — not God-given, fixed, immutable and natural facts, but constructs, created by men, usually for the benefit of those who hold power (political, economic, social or sexual) within that society.

To the advocates of the new approach, the position taken by deconstruction is essentially liberating, giving an individual or society that embraced it the means to jettison the past far more easily than would be the case if current views of the functioning of society were seen as immutable facts of nature which could not be denied or changed. To opponents, however, nothing less than the whole of western civilisation is at stake, for to them the 'Real Agenda' of deconstruction is to 'dismantle and effectively destroy — cultural life as it has existed for some two hundred years in the democratic societies of the Western World'.[3]

While this quotation indicates very precisely the potential for irrational personal commitment to one side or the other in the Great Literary Theory Debate, it also, quite accidentally, illustrates the link I will be attempting to establish between the essential motives behind deconstruction and those which motivated the writing of *Troilus and Cressida*. It is precisely with what can only be called a deconstruction of the myths and sacred ideological cows of his own stage of Western civilisation that Shakespeare seems to be concerned when he wrote *Troilus and Cressida*, systematically undermining the central pillars of the world view that dominated thinking at the time, that world view still being essentially Medieval, even although it was in the process of being modified, often radically, by quite different Renaissance attitudes.

In essence this perception of the play is not new; critics have been circling round the idea for some time. It has fairly frequently been suggested that *Troilus and Cressida* questions Medieval orthodoxy, but only in passing. In a selection of representative orthodox criticism such as the *Casebook*,[4] for example, several of the selected essays indicate this. Kenneth Muir points out that in the play the 'age of chivalry is dead' (p. 88), the chivalric attitude, of course, having its roots firmly in the Medieval world, while A.P. Rossiter expresses the specific opinion that 'The Troilus and

Cressida story is medieval and chivalric, and it is that which is deflated' (p. 101).

Furthermore, even before the appearance of deconstruction as an organised method of literary criticism, critics have seen this deflationary process in terms very similar to those of deconstruction, i.e. as an attack on the central but outmoded beliefs of the era in which the play was written. R.F. Kaufmann, in another essay in the *Casebook* states in his introductory remarks that ' ... the major artist reaches a point where he must actively question the reality and centrality of [the] inherited way of making sense of things' (p. 151), although his supporting analysis is couched in more generalised moral terms than could be expected from this introductory statement, and in fact does not do anything like full justice to the potential for illumination present in this remark.

Building on these suggestions, what I would like to bring out in this paper is first of all the particularly and uniquely *Medieval* origin of the ideas and beliefs which are deflated in *Troilus and Cressida*, and secondly the degree and extent to which this deflationary process takes place, a process so systematically applied and so all-embracing that it cannot be seen as one issue among many in the play but rather as the prime motivating factor, the central unifying principle which underlies the entire play.

What should first be established is that by attacking Medievalism in the play, Shakespeare is unpicking the fabric that held what was then the given or received notions of society and civilisation together. For despite the Renaissance, Elizabethans remained Medieval in their attitudes, and the patterns of contemporary habitual thought, both in broad general thinking, and in particular details, followed Medieval lines. It would be worth adding emphasis to the word 'habitual' here, for these patterns of thought were deeply and seemingly permanently ingrained, having dominated human thinking for hundreds of years. The temptation to see such patterns of thought as immutable and God-given would have been only natural, particularly when the church (in a religious age) and the state (in an equally authoritarian age) combined to enforce this feeling on the minds of the population at large. The Tudor *Homilies* are the most obvious example of this sort of attempt to maintain the status quo (social, political, and ideological), but conservative orthodoxy was enforced in a variety of other ways, and was built into the fabric of society. To such an extent was this conservatism prevalent that the Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights, the 'choice and master spirits of the age' even while identifying and exploring signs throughout society of the disintegration of an old and familiar world, and the rise of

potent forces for change and transformation, maintained to a man an orthodox and conservative moral view of these new forces, and condemned them roundly.[5]

It could be argued that Shakespeare wrote *Troilus and Cressida* in the same conservative spirit, yearning nostalgically for a perfect past which is implied by its obvious lack in the play, yet it seems to me that the undermining of so many of the central myths and beliefs of the Elizabethan/Medieval view of life suggests that Shakespeare is writing from a somewhat different position, expressing rather in dramatic form an intense awareness that not only is the present different from the past, but that the interpretation of the world inherited from the past had *always* been illusion, something like a vast cultural and political confidence trick foisted upon Englishmen for centuries, with no basis in reality whatsoever.

What evidence is there to indicate this? That the play is concerned with wider issues than the ostensible subject matter is suggested by the proportion of stage-time allotted to the two lovers whose names give the title to the play, as compared with other Shakespeare plays with similar titles. Kenneth Palmer, the author of the New Arden edition has done a count of both scene and lines in which the lovers appear *as lovers* and discovers that which ever way you count, the total is 33 per cent.[6] This should be compared to a proportion of 91 per cent in *Romeo and Juliet*, and an extremely high exposure of either one love or the other, or both together in *Antony and Cleopatra*.[7] This suggests that even on the superficial level of subject matter, Shakespeare's concern is not *primarily* with the lovers whose names provide the title of the play, but that, rather, their story is a small part of a much larger subject, that subject, clearly, being the Trojan war.

Although only a small part of the seventh year of the war is actually depicted, the whole process of the war from the rape of Helen onwards provides the context of the action, and affects our interpretation of the play: for example, the optimism of the Greeks that now, with Hector dead, the war will soon end, is heavily ironic in the light of the audience's knowledge that it will drag on for another three years.

If the Trojan war *is* the focal point of the play (with the Troilus and Cressida love story reflecting aspects of the central issues of the play), then a view of the play as a deconstruction of Medieval myths and attitudes central to the Elizabethan world view becomes more possible. For a widely current contemporary myth held that London has been founded by Brutus, grandson of Aeneas, the son of Priam who fled from the burning Troy and eventually founded Rome. The Brutus myth was Britain's claim to classical ancestry, and it seems to have been taken seriously — Queen Elizabeth is

reported to have 'quartered the arms of a mythical Troy in one version of her official coat of arms, so acknowledging the antiquity of her line'.[8] A deflationary view of the Trojan war, therefore, and an inclusion of the Trojans in Thersites's conclusion that the action of the play can be summed up in his statement 'wars and lechery, wars and lechery, nothing else holds fashion', becomes within the context of the Brutus myth nothing less than a deflationary view of the mythical origins of Britain. The modern equivalent might be a play implying that the Founding Fathers of America were card-carrying communists to a man.

In the light of earlier assumptions about the play, it is particularly worth stressing that the Trojans are specifically included in this deflationary process. The tendency of earlier critics was to see the Trojans as noble heroes and the Greeks as scheming rogues, and to read the play on the assumption that Shakespeare would have automatically followed the popular Elizabethan bias in favour of the Trojans, which resulted from the mythical 'fact' of the Trojan origins of England. Such sentimental views of the Trojans are, to say the least, misplaced; in fact it is more true to say that the Trojans bear the main brunt of the deflationary process going on in the play. For by the simple fact of the exalted moral and chivalric position they assume they lay themselves open to deflation, whereas the more cynical Greeks are what they are, and remain so throughout. The most obvious instance of this is the extensive deflation of the tenets of the chivalric code, which is embraced most extensively, verbally anyway, by the Trojans.

This code must be acknowledged as one of the central governing ideologies of the medieval period, simply because it was the code of behaviour followed by the Medieval ruling classes. Because of its nature, it also had innately within it the capacity to be sentimentalised and romanticised to such a degree that its reality lost touch completely with the elaborate mythology that evolved around it — we are all familiar with the figure of the knight in shining armour, rescuing damsels in distress, indulging in all the absurd rituals of courtly love, and so on. This very familiarity of the average *modern* westerner with the chivalric myth indicates the strength of that myth, surviving in its central points virtually intact centuries after the social, political, and economic system which generated it had disappeared. The Elizabethans, four hundred years closer to the Middle Ages than we are, experienced this myth with an immediacy and vitality that is highly indicative. Chivalry lived in men's imaginations, and chivalric stances were often put into practice in a way that indicates the strength of such ideals in men's minds: Palmer, for example, refers to a contemporary account of the Earl of Essex, while commanding a raid on Spain, challenging the Spaniards outside Lisbon in May 1589 to 'break a

lance in disputing the honour of Queen Elizabeth and of their own mistresses' (op. cit., p.142n). Similarly, the story of Sir Philip Sidney's death was renowned as personifying the chivalric ideal of honour. Noticing that a friend of his was going into battle at Zutphen without thigh armour, Sir Philip removed his own, was wounded in the thigh, and died a lingering but much admired death. Jousting armour made for Henry VIII in the early sixteenth century can still be seen in the Tower of London, while Prince Henry, James I's eldest son, was still breaking lances for the honour of his lady at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The Elizabethan nobility had a vested interest in maintaining the chivalric myth, since they were the direct descendants of Medieval knights and still bore the titles and possessed the estates associated with chivalry, and were therefore the main beneficiaries of the mystical aura which chivalry created around them as a result. But besides having the advantage of being the set of values adopted by the ruling class, the chivalric myth had been popularised by the romantic tales of knightly deeds, which had originated in France with the *Song of Roland*, and evolved through such characters as Amadis de Gaula, a Spanish hero, Guy of Warwick an English knight, and a host of others. Even if this process of popularising had lost touch with the moral ideals of chivalry,[9] the continuing existence of the concept of the noble knight, and a generalised commitment to the central ideals of chivalry remained strong at the popular level, as well as among the nobility — strong enough for Shakespeare to feel the need to debunk the whole mystique of chivalry in *Troilus and Cressida* and elsewhere (in parts 1 and 2 of *King Henry IV*, for example).[10]

Within the context of the massive production of popular chivalric material,[11] it can be seen that the legends of the ten-year siege of Troy provided the Medieval writers of chivalric romances with ideal subject matter. In the historical Medieval imagination, Greeks and Trojans turned easily into knights in shining armour fighting — within the courtly love tradition, which was an offshoot of chivalry — for the honour of a lady, as all true knights should.[12] In fact, it is this combination of love and war — of love as a *motive* for war — that made the Trojan war such an ideal vehicle for chivalric romances, since these activities comprised those most central to the mythology of the knight. The origins of the warrior role were functional (since in the early Middle Ages the mounted warrior, from whom the knight developed, had to defend the kingdom), while the love function was invented by the troubadours, and was purely a literary creation. Over the centuries these two ideals, very different in origin, had become so entangled as to be inseparable. This combination is reflected in Troilus's

statement at II.iii.200–203[13] in the high chivalric style that Helen is a

> . . . theme of honour and renown,
> A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds,
> Whose present courage may beat down our foes,
> And fame in time to canonize us . . .

and is extended in the Troilus and Cressida story, which is developed in essentially the same terms. These combined motives, seen as expressing the essence of nobility and virtue in the chivalric code, are reduced to mere 'wars and lechery' in Thersites's already-quoted condemnation of the reality of what happens before the walls of Troy, and this reductive summary is prepared for in scene after scene throughout the play. The major strokes by which Shakespeare demolishes chivalric pretensions are clear. In her brief appearance in III.i. Helen, the cause of the war, makes an impression of stupidity and triviality that is in stark contrast to Troilus's image-building speech. Aeneas's delivery of Hector's challenge is couched in the exaggerated postures of chivalry:

> If there be one among the fair'st of Greece,
> That holds his honour higher than his ease,
> That feeds his praise more than he fees his peril,
> That knows his valour and knows not fear,
> That loves his mistress more than in confession
> With truant vows to her own lips he loves,
> And dares avow her beauty and her worth
> In other arms than hers — to him his challenge:
> Hector, in view of Trojans and of Greeks,
> Shall make it good, or do his best to do it,
> He hath a lady wiser, fairer, truer,
> Than ever Greek did couple in his arms;
> And will tomorrow with his trumpet call . . .
> .   To rouse a Grecian that is true in love.

(I.iii.264–278)

Yet immediately the challenge is turned into a manoeuvre to get Achilles back into the field by Ulysses, and is dismissed as 'trash' by Achilles himself. We watch the romantic exchange of vows of eternal commitment between a knight and his lady, Troilus and Cressida, only to see a similar exchange between Diomed and the same lady short hours later in the Greek camp. Hector chivalrously insists on entering the field on the day of his death (very similar in notion to the real chivalric gesture of Sidney at Zutphen), only to die a horrifically unchivalric death at the hands of the Myrmidons. All these incidents point to the impractical absurdity — which

degenerates into a dangerous lunacy — of the Trojan maintenance of the chivalric ideal.

It can be argued that these scenes, if one sees them only in broad outline, can be read in the sentimental way that they have frequently been up to now: that Trojan attitudes, although outmoded, still reflect an essential, if naive *virtue*, and that Shakespeare is indeed on the side of the Trojans, as all true Elizabethan Englishmen were meant to be. This view is unsustainable if one delves a little deeper into the legitimacy of Trojan chivalric attitudes in relation to the Medieval ideals of chivalric behaviour. The theory of chivalry had been developed to an extremely high degree (to the extent of the drawing up of lists of rigid rules governing knightly behaviour),[14] so that it was easy to define with great precision what was acceptable behaviour for a knight.

Even a cursory examination of a specimen of these rules and prohibitions indicate that, as is to be expected, the Greeks break a whole range of them. For example, a fourteenth century list of potential crimes against the chivalric ideal includes not observing chivalric codes of behaviour, fighting in a cruel, implacable manner in order to gain vengeance, to dominate, and to injure, and puffing oneself up with pride, which are obviously applicable to various of the Greek leaders.[15]

The Trojans, however, though outwardly more apparently 'chivalric' than the Greeks, tend to sin against the more subtle expectations of the chivalric code. For example Troilus, though seemingly acting in accordance with the code of courtly love by being pale and wan for love of a lady — which every knight worth his salt was meant to be[16] — cannot fight in the war because of his love for Cressida, which went against the romantic Medieval notion that love made a knight brave rather than unmanning him: ' "no knight can be brave unless he is in love; love gives the knight his courage" ' (Barber, p. 35). Equally, it was expected that the love of a woman would improve a man, that she should be 'spiritually superior to her lover' and that she should 'educate her lover, consciously and deliberately, until his moral worth makes him a fit partner' (Barber p. 125). Cressida has little perceptible positive effect on Troilus's character, other than to make him incapable of fighting, while her only attempts at 'education' are to teach the audience the cynical, worldly-wise techniques of 'how to catch your man and keep him':

> Yet hold I off. Women are angels, wooing:
> Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.
> That she belov'd knows naught that knows this:
> Men prize the things ungain'd more than it is.

That she was never yet that ever knew
Love got so sweet as when desire did sue.
Therefore this maxim out of love I teach:
'Achievement is command: ungain'd, beseech.'
Then though my heart's content firm love doth bear,
Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear.
                                                    (I.ii.291–300)

On a more subtle level, the imagery from the market-place that pervades the play, the imagery of buying and selling, indicates a further debasement of the chivalric ideal, for it had become a part of the caste system of chivalry that knights and merchants were members of mutually exclusive classes: a 'merchant could not become a knight' and 'neither should a knight become a merchant' (Barber, pp. 32–33). This imagery, used by both Greek and Trojan,[17] is highly indicative of Shakespeare's subversive attitude to the codes of chivalry, since it undermines the validity of that code on one of the most basic and pervasive of levels, that of language.

The chivalric ideal is undermined in other ways. As has been pointed out (Palmer, pp.71–77), the asking after the identity of an individual is a perpetual motif in the play, and there is no other of Shakespeare's plays where people are so continually asking as to the identity of another. The chivalric system in particular, and the Medieval social system in general, was intended to have the opposite effect of *establishing* identity, since it was based on the concept of a fixed and immutable social hierarchy into which everyone fitted and in which everyone knew their place. Knights and the nobility in particular could affirm their identity, their rank, and titles with aplomb, since the whole pageantry of chivalry, the family tree that could be traced back to the Conqueror (in Queen Elizabeth's case, to the Trojans and beyond), the badges, coats of arms and heraldic devices, the uniquely-designed shields and personal accoutrements, the colourful livery of a nobleman's servants, all attested the incontrovertible fact of *who he was.* Questioning the absolute certainty of a nobleman's identity is therefore undermining the certainty and confidence which the complex and elaborate system of Medieval ritual was meant to provide.[18]

The most significant incident questioning the genuineness of the Trojans' commitment to chivalric ideals (and to broader Medieval moral and ethical ideals) comes in their council in II.ii. The debate over whether to give Helen back or not turns on issues central not just to the chivalric code, but to fundamental Medieval values in general. Hector's appeal to the fact that the 'laws of nature and of nations' cry out against Helen being held, the fact that all civilised societies aknowledge fully the moral and legal necessity of wife

living with husband, undermines the chivalric basis upon which the
Trojans are fighting, for Helen's rape makes the war unjust, and
therefore not worthy of the true knight's interest or participation.[19]
Furthermore, the terms of his appeal go to the very heart of the
Medieval view that civilised life was based on the rule of God-given
law, a view that permeated literally all aspects of orthodox
Medieval thought.

Troilus's reply is couched in terms that would be anathema to the
Medieval purist. Hector claims that it is unreasonable to keep
Helen (II.ii.33–36): Troilus rejects the appeal to reason as if to
speak in such terms were madness:

> Nay, if we talk of reason
> Let's shut our gates and sleep: manhood and honour
> Should have hare hearts, would they but fat their thoughts
> With this cramm'd reason: reason and respect
> Make livers pale, and lustihood deject.

Medieval views of human behaviour were based on the belief that
the superior man manifested reason in his actions and thoughts,
since reason reflected the higher, God-like part of his nature (the
opposite being will, which reflected his baser, animal nature). By
rejecting reason (and by prevailing in the argument) Troilus is seen
therefore to be rejecting the highest Medieval vision of human
nature, that quality which edged men closer to the angels,
preferring to follow a 'principle' which sinks men downwards
towards the beasts.

But even more significant, Hector's defence of reason and law is
shown to be only a matter of form, for when it comes to actually
deciding the issue, he not only goes against his own (perfectly
correct) statements of orthodox Medieval morality, but also breaks
one of the prime rules of the Chivalric code, which stated that a
knight should fight for the common good (that common good
presumably being seen in the highly moral terms of Hector's earlier
statements) and not for personal gain (see Contamine, p. 276, rule
20):

> . . . yet ne'ertheless,
> My spritely brethren, I propend to you
> In resolution to keep Helen still
> For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence
> Upon our joint and several dignities.

(II.ii.189–193)

Personal dignity, reputation, ego, whatever you like to call it,
becomes the motivation for action, the motive that gives flesh to
the real world. Morality has no substantive reality whatsoever.

Fighting an unjust war, fighting for an unworthy cause, fighting for their 'joint and several dignities', the Trojans' concept of honour, and their indulgence in courtly and chivalric behaviour, becomes a nightmarish travesty of the chivalric ideals, indicating that such ideals are a matter of rhetorical form only, having no substance in reality. If they have any substance, then that substance is invariably subverted in some form, as we have seen (Aeneas's challenge being used for tactical purposes by Ulysses; Hector's chivalric ideals driving him out to the battle and to his death, etc.). When we remember that it is the Greeks and Trojans, whose struggle had been turned into a chivalric romance, that indulge in this unchivalric behaviour, then it seems more likely that Shakespeare's purpose in writing the play is closer to that of Cervantes when writing Don Quixote, namely to '"destory the influence of books of chivalry among the common people"'.[20] Cervantes, as Byron put it, 'smiled Spain's chivalry away'; the bitter tone and reductionist attitude of *Troilus and Cressida* suggests that Shakespeare's intention is to do a far more thorough demolition job on chivalry in the play. The moral issues with which the play struggles further suggests that he is not just disillusioned with chivalry, but with the orthodoxies of the Middle Ages as a whole.

This comes out further in Ulysses's great speech on degree. This much-discussed speech contains, as it has been exhaustively shown, a series of Medieval commonplaces.[21] If Palmer is correct in his contention that it is by this speech, together with Hector's on reason and law, that we are to judge the play, then we can only conclude from both speeches that the central point of the play is that neither order and degree, nor the rule of law and reason apply. Ulysses's speech is notable for the fact that he is painting in Medieval terms an ideal situation that *no longer exists*; effectively Hector's speech does the same. Degree has broken down; the action of the play shows to what extent this breakdown has taken place (i.e. completely), while the central position of the Greek-Trojan struggle within the ruling Elizabethan popular mythology suggests that this breakdown goes to the heart of received Elizabethan notions about their culture.

The importance of this breakdown cannot be over-estimated. In the final analysis, the most important inheritance that the Medieval world bequeathed — or attempted to bequeath — to its inheritors was the sense that Man lived in an ordered, purposeful universe, governed by law. Building on their Greco-Judaic inheritance, Medieval moralists and thinkers struggled to create a sense of order, seeing the Christian religion as the ultimate ordering principle which made sense of the universe, and gave meaning to man's place in that universe. Medieval Man, whether he wished to

obey it or not, had an absolute code of conduct against which to measure his own life.[22]

It is this sense that is essentially demolished in *Troilus and Cressida*. Palmer comments on the fact that every aspect of the play is carefully created so as to deny any possibility of an absolute judgement and to 'insist upon the relative at the expense of the absolute' (p. 84). The inheritance — the received notions about Elizabethan culture — is seen to be flawed, not just slightly, but at the root. The vision of society explored in the play seems to come closer to the Hobbesian view of a situation of 'bellum omnia contra omnes', but with no powerful ruler figure to force a sense of order from the top (Agamemnon, nominal leader of the Greeks, is notably inadequate in this respect). Life is reduced to a ghastly vision of futile, endless war 'for a placket', with everything that once was of value (reputation, fidelity, love, and loyalty) being rapidly reduced by all-devouring time to travesties of themselves, while self-seeking individuals in their best moments go through the forms that that vision of an ordered meaningful universe gave to mankind, but in their worst moments forget even the forms, and indulge in the extremes of egotistical self-interest so automatically that it leaves one in no doubt that this is the impression of mankind that Shakespeare seems to wish to leave with the audience when they leave the theatre. The fact that the action of the play is so deeply rooted in the mythological roots of England, and deals so extensively with so much other Medieval mythology suggests that Shakespeare is viewing the entire mythological basis of Elizabethan society with a scepticism as profound as anything the citizens of that most sceptical of centuries, the twentieth century — the century that produced that most sceptical of all methods of approach to literature and ideas, deconstruction — are capable of.

Rand Afrikaans University,
Johannesburg.

NOTES
1. *PN Review* No. 48, Jan. 1986.
2. T. Eagleton, *An Introduction to Literary Theory*, pp. 141–143.
3. H. Kramer, 'The Real Agenda' in *PN Review* No. 48, pp. 49–50.
4. P. Martin (ed.), *Shakespeare*: Troilus and Cressida. *a Casebook* (London: Macmillan, 1976).
5. See L.C. Knights, *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1968), particularly Chap. 4.
6. W. Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, ed. K. Palmer (London and New York: Methuen, 1982), p. 39.
7. See Palmer, ibid., for his comments on the situation in *Antony and Cleopatra*.
8. See R.A. Foakes, '*Troilus and Cressida* Reconsidered' in William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* (New York: Signet, 1963), pp. 276–277 for a indication of the pervasiveness of this legend, together with references to more detailed discussions of the myth.

9. See R. Barber, *The Knight and Chivalry* (London: Longman, 1970), p. 324.
10. It is worth noting that at about the same time Cervantes was doing a far more gentle hatchet job on chivalry in his *Don Quixote* in Spain. The need to debunk chivalry was obviously in the air of Renaissance Europe, but the need itself is significant of the powerful presence of a myth to debunk. Equally the quality of the literature which this debunking process evoked is in itself a comment on the continuing strength and vitality of the myth.
11. For a general discussion of this see Barber, Chap. 21, pp. 314–329; see also L.B. Wright, *Middle-class Culture in Elizabethan England* (London: Methuen, 1958), Chaps. IV and XI.
12. See Barber, p. 33, or F.B. Artz, *The Mind of the Middle Ages* (Chicago and London: Chicago U.P., 1980), p. 346.
13. All references are to K. Palmer's New Arden Edition (op. cit.).
14. The Renaissance continued the Medieval habit of writing handbooks of correct behaviour, although concerned with its own particular interests, the ideal moving from that of the perfect knight to the perfect courtier, this figure being a modification and extension of Medieval knightly ideals; see G.M. Pinciss, 'The Old Honor and the New Courtesy: *1 Henry IV* in *Shakespeare Survey* 31 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 85–91. Pinciss's argument supports the case for seeing in Shakespeare's work a general rejection of simplistic Medieval chivalric notions.
15. For the full list see P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), pp. 275–276. Books dealing with courtesy and conduct were common: Pinciss, op. cit. p. 91 refers to two bibliographies listing such works.
16. See Chaucer's description of the squire as having 'suffered much for love' in the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales* for a typical example.
17. See, for example, Paris's speech to Diomedes at IV.i.52–55 which refers to Helen in terms of something that is being bought and sold.
18. Shakespeare had already integrated a similar questioning process into an earlier play, indicating that his concern with the passing of the certainties of the Medieval world, and specifically the certainties supplied by the chivalric code, was not confined to only one work. The opening scenes of *Richard II* (I.i and iii), are played out as if the structures of the Medieval social system are still firmly in place, and resound with the confident claims to identity of noblemen securely places within that system: 'Harry of Herford, Lancaster, and Derby am I' says Bolingbroke in I.i, only to move rapidly from that seemingly eternal status to one of banishment, then of disinheritance, then of traitorous return from banishment, then of rebel, and then of king, all in a few short acts, as the old world of fixed and rigid hierarchies collapses. (For a good, brief discussion of this process see J. Leeds Barroll *et al*, *The Revels History of Drama in English* (London: Methuen, 1975), Vol. III, pp. 269–276). In *Troilus and Cressida*, which explores to a far greater degree the collapse of the Medieval system, even such initial certainty is gone. Chivalric titles give no substance and certainty to individuals any more: reputation is a thing soon forgotten ('Time hath, my lord, a wallet as his back/Wherein he puts alms to oblivion'), a king cannot be distinguished from those standing around him, identity has to be requested and reaffirmed constantly. Chivalry is relegated to mere form, devoid of any substance.
19. See Contamine, p. 276: only criminal knights 'take part in unjust wars'.
20. As quoted by Barber, p. 325.
21. See Palmer, p. 321–322.
22. Medieval notions of order, and the all-pervading influence of the Christian religion, both seem to be such common-places, that any documentation here is unnecessary.

UNIVERSITY PLANNING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT: SOME CONSIDERATIONS AND CAVEATS.[1]

by D.A. MAUGHAN BROWN

The years from 1984 to 1987 saw the University of Natal experiencing increasing difficulties in balancing its budget as a result of substantial cuts in government subsidy. In terms of what the University should have received had the government's own subsidy formula been rigorously applied, it found its subsidy cut annually by 5 %, 15 %, 17 % and 16 % during these years.

In trying to balance its budget the University had to resort to freezing all posts as they fell vacant; to drastic cuts in votes for departmental supplies and services, in grants to the libraries for books and periodicals, and in the replacement of equipment; and to progressive increases in student fees. At the same time the University set about restructuring its University Planning Committee (UPC) with a view to producing a long-term plan for the future of the University which would enable it to prioritise and rationalise its activities and avoid having to respond on a purely *ad hoc* basis to the annual subsidy cut.

The progressively worsening situation reached a crisis point early in 1988 when it became known that the government subsidy to the University of Natal for 1988 had been cut by 25 %. While the 1988 budget could be balanced by dint of *ad hoc* austerity measures of unprecedented severity, which even included a mid-year increase in student fees, one of the major effects of this cut was to impress on the University Administration and Council the urgency of the need for a University Plan. A subcommittee of UPC was asked to prepare guidelines for an Academic Plan for the University. The outcome of its deliberations, titled 'The Short Term Plan for Academic Departments' (hereafter referred to as the 'Short Term Plan' or STP), was presented to a meeting of Deans and members of UPC early in April.

The 'Short Term Plan' takes as its bottom line the University's stated goal 'To serve the community through excellence in teaching, learning, scholarship and research'; works on the assumption that levels of government funding are unlikely to improve in the short term; and argues that in a situation of negative growth new activities and the improvement of existing activities cannot occur without pruning other activities which no longer have high priority. The 'Short Term Plan' cites figures which show that once the cost to the University of its staff (R87,5m) is subtracted from the total income (R124,4m) the remaining R36,9m is substantially less than the R44,9m non-staffing priority requests

deemed to be 'contractual obligations'. It concludes that the University does not have enough money to carry out its day to day activities without making substantial savings on its staffing budget and establishes the target figure to be saved on staff establishment as R13m, computed as the amount required if it is going to be possible 'to run the normal activities of the university and meet requests for all A ["contractual obligations"] and some B ["essential"] items of expenditure for items other than staffing' (STP, p. iii). The savings to be effected are to be divided on a *pro rata* basis between academic departments (R7,6m), the Medical School (R1,1m) and administrative, technical and service departments (R4,3m).

The only 'reasonable broad strategy' to employ in attempting to meet the academic departments' share of the required savings is held to be 'one that emphasizes academic excellence but proceeds with a clear idea of the financial consequences of any proposal' (STP, p. 7). This makes it necessary to 'cost our activities properly so that we are aware of both the income generated by an activity as well as the true costs associated with it' (STP, p. 7). To this end the sub-committee introduced three new indices for assessing departments and faculties:

(i) *Professorial Equivalent Academic* (PEA), which takes a professor as one unit and then weights each post according to the ratio of the salary and benefits attaching to that post to the salary and benefits of a professor. Salaries at the mid-point of the scale are used.

(ii) *Subsidy Earning Student* (SES). FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) students are given weights in terms of the subsidy they earn as undergraduate or post-graduate students. In addition, students in technical faculties are weighted by a factor of 1,3 to allow for the fact that students in these faculties generate 30 % more subsidy and fee income than in non-technical faculties.

(iii) *Weighted Student/Staff Ratio* (WSSR), which is the ratio of SES to PEA. This is seen as 'a measure of the financial viability of a department. SES is directly proportional to income and PEA is directly proportional to cost. Thus a high WSSR represents a "cheap" department while a low one represents an "expensive" one' (STP, p. 10).

The 'Short Term Plan' establishes the target for academic staff savings as 102.8 PEA units, calculates a target WSSR of 20.9 for the University as a whole, and fixes target cuts for different groups of faculties. Commerce and Law, whose 'classes are very large and ... therefore economical to teach' (STP, p. 19), are described as 'cash cows' for the University, and no cuts are envisaged. Agriculture, Engineering and Science (the 'Technical faculties') are given a target cut of 17,6 %; Arts and Social Science a target of

17,2 %; Architecture a target of 39,3 %; and Education a target of 6,6 %. Having established these parameters, the 'Short Term Plan' goes on to say: 'The details of planning within these constraints are an academic affair. Thus the details of how the targets are to be achieved are put firmly within the hands of the faculties themselves' (p. 12).

The 'Short Term Plan' clearly envisages redundancy as an inevitable consequence of staff cuts, but recommends that 'where possible, staff reductions should be phased in to take maximum advantage of natural attrition' (STP, p.v). 'Natural staff attrition' is seen as operating over a three-year period, but there is an exception: 'Where departments are to be abolished it would, however, be advisable to implement this without delay' (STP, p. 21).

In handing the formulation of faculty plans over to the various Faculty Planning Committees, the 'Short Term Plan' provides both a framework within which academic departments are to be evaluated and a timetable. There are two major components to the evaluation of departments. Firstly, the evaluation of 'academic excellence and community service' under four heads: Postgraduate Programmes; Undergraduate Teaching; Research; and Community Service. Secondly, the evaluation of the service course function being performed by the department. The proposed timetable allowed the month of May for departmental reviews, June for Faculty Planning Committees to prepare their faculty plans, and July for the University Planning Committee to prepare a University Plan on the basis of the faculty plans.

As might be expected, the release of the 'Short Term Plan' to Faculty Planning Committees via the Deans occasioned considerable consternation, both as to the content of the document and the lack of consultation with the academic community involved in its drawing-up and release. Questions were raised, among many others, about the apparent arbitrariness of the R13m target; about the grouping of the faculties (why exclude Architecture from the Technical faculties, and Law from the Arts and Social Science group?); about the weighting of the SES figure in the Technical faculties in an index designed to compute staffing costs; about the absence from the cost-assessment of the costs of equipment and supplies and services.

My purpose in this paper is not to produce a critique of the 'Short Term Plan', nor do I wish to seem unduly critical of its authors who were operating under considerable pressure in response to what was seen as an emergency. There can be no doubt, given the proportion of the University's budget currently expended on salaries, that if our Universities are going to be faced with continuing and potentially crippling subsidy cuts (and it seems

safe to assume that they are) then cuts in staffing are going to have to be made. It also seems clear to me that the arbitrariness inherent in relying for those cuts on deaths, retirements and resignations militates against any coherent attempt to develop to its full potential the University's ability to serve the community.

My intention is to discuss some general considerations relating to university planning which it seems important to air in the light of the extremely negative effect on the Natal University academic community produced by the 'Short Term Plan'. I want to say something about the general process of planning; I will comment on normative models of planning; and I will conclude by stressing the importance of taking staff morale into consideration in any university planning exercise.

*   *   *   *

Planning involves a concept of the future. A good plan would involve an assessment of the present and would base its projections for the future on an analysis of the way the present has been shaped by the past. The future is always unknown territory. If you are planning an expedition into unkown territory there would seem to be a number of obvious things to do. You would try to establish where you wanted to go; you would find out as much as possible about the terrain in order to try to ensure that your proposed vehicle was suitable; you would choose your vehicle on the basis of the number of people to be taken on the expedition; you would establish where fuel was to be obtained; you would examine your starting-out point to see if it was the best point from which to start, and if not you would move to some other more suitable base; you would talk to people who had set off in the direction you wanted to go, and you would read everything you could lay your hands on written about their experiences. Planning involves looking outwards and looking forwards.

As the term 'plan' implies a formalised process, the necessary information would be systematically gathered and sifted and conclusions would be drawn from it before it became a 'plan'. If planning involves a conceptualisation of future time it is also a process that takes time if it is going to be done properly.

If one were to apply the analogy to university planning in the contemporary South African context one might conclude that before producing anything worthy of being called a plan for a university the following would be necessary:
(1) A demographic analysis and an evaluation of the specific needs of the relevant region over the next 20–25 years. In what proportions is this region going to need, for example, graduates with outstandingly taught first degrees built on

      appropriate curricula, as against the products of internationally renowned postgraduate programmes?

(2) Following from this, one would need a set of goals and objectives, a statement of mission, far more precise than such vaguely stated goals as 'To serve the community through excellence in teaching, learning, scholarship and research' or 'To help meet the university educational needs of the whole community while maintaining educational standards'. What, precisely, are the educational needs of the whole community?

(3) Thirdly, one needs to ask what, for that matter, are appropriate educational standards. To take over James Moulder's observation (see p. 1 of this issue), planning should have as one of its starting points, an assessment of the appropriate levels at which our teaching should be pitched — which might vary between different faculties but should be based, at least in part, on an evaluation of external needs rather than simply on faculty predilections.

(4) One would need the elaboration of satisfactory methods of assessing current performance and 'appropriateness'. In terms of individual departments these should be faculty-specific, and should be far more sophisticated than a crude cost-of-staffing/income-from-students ratio. These measures would also have to include some mechanism for the objective assessment of teaching effectiveness.

      This perhaps needs some expansion. When it comes to establishing priorities for the allocation of limited resources to different departments, some of which appear to be performing better than others, it would undoubtedly be useful to have some objective statistical index of performance. But our universities clearly need to elaborate a statistical measure of efficiency and effectiveness much more refined than the WSSR. To be in any way appropriate to the evaluation of academic faculties and departments such a statistical measure would have to be capable of taking the following features of a University into account: the greater need for small group teaching in some faculties as against others; the different amounts of time that need to be devoted to marking and practicals in the different faculties; the different weightings that need to be given to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in different faculties; the undergraduate pass rates in the different faculties; the differing requirements of academic publication in different disciplines and the publication rates of the different faculties.

(5) There would need to be systematic research into the experience of similar institutions in similar situations elsewhere. Cuts in university funding are a world-wide

phenomenon — what have been the experiences of other institutions in similar positions? In 1987 alone the six issues of *Higher Education: the international journal of higher education and educational planning*, just one of many relevant journals, contained twelve articles of direct relevance to our own planning situation. What can one learn from other people's mistakes?

We need to know where we are going, what needs we have to try to meet when we get there, how many students we are going to be taking with us and what their expectations are likely to be. We need to suit our vehicle to the terrain and to choose what looks likely to be the most appropriate route.

                              *   *   *   *

I want to elaborate a little on the question of defining the University's mission. In recent years a good deal has been written and said, and much attention has, appropriately, been focused on the educationally 'disadvantaged' status of many black students coming into the University of Natal. Our mission, and presumably those of other universities, has, to some extent, been reassessed with regard to this changing constituency.

But when last was our mission reassessed with regard to our so-called 'traditional' constituency? What about the precise nature of the University's mission with regard to the products of the 'white' educational system? What about the cultural and educational deprivation our supposedly 'advantaged' students have experienced as a result of being channelled through a racially segregated educational system? What about the parochial effects of being isolated at the southern tip of Africa, unwanted in the rest of Africa, in only very rare instances exposed to direct experience of Western Europe or North America, and subjected to a constant media bombardment designed to make out that South Africa is the best of all possible worlds? What about the cultural deprivation resulting from the banning of books and films and the cultural boycott? What about the intellect-dulling effects of rampant militarism — and the fact that many of our male students have been subjected to two years in the SADF by the time they get to us? What, perhaps most devastatingly, about the effects of growing up in an insular white cultural environment which is actively hostile to the kind of critical questioning which is the life-blood of a university?

Our white students have in the main been subjected to a highly authoritarian school system, a home environment in which books generally come a very long way behind television and outdoor recreation in the determination of priorities, and media which by

and large, either by choice or by governmental edict, do very little serious questioning of the fundamental structures of our society and the day to day basis on which it is ruled and organised. Many of our white students come to us totally disadvantaged in comparison with their black counterparts by virtue of a socialisation process which, far from encouraging the asking of questions, has actively discouraged critical-mindedness.

If our white students are 'prepared' for University, while our black students are perceived to be 'under-prepared', what is that saying about the universities for which the background I have sketched is seen as suitable preparation? How should a university respond, as a university, to this situation? Should we pat ourselves on the back that so many people are applying for our particular faculty that we can afford to impose, say, a 32 matric-point cut-off, and then proceed to turn out Accountants or Engineers or Teachers three or four years later with precisely the same mind-set with which they entered the University, overlaid only by a certain amount of technical knowledge about Accountancy, Engineering or the particular subjects they are going to teach? Or should our programmes have as part of their object the attempt to undo the damage to the intellect done to many of our white students by a white South African education and upbringing under the Nationalist Government? If there is a legitimate distinction to be drawn between the activities of universities and those of technikons (which in itself needs to be discussed), in what ways are we, in fact, different in kind from technikons? Is it possible that some of what we do now would be more appropriately done at a technikon? Until we have asked such questions, until we have defined the role of a university in a situation such as this, how can we begin to plan for our future?

The literature suggests that close attention to redefining the university's mission is a pre-requisite for successful planning in situations such as ours. J.D. Dennison, in an article discussing the University of British Columbia's response to financial crisis, argues that a university plan must give definition to the essential mission of the university and, in doing so, delineate the bases for determining the quality of any programme and assessing its relationship to the central purpose of the institution. This is 'vital', Dennison argues, 'to any academically defensible and politically acceptable approach to program reduction which might be necessary . . . ' (p. 142).

Steven Olswang, in an account of the University of Washington's response to a crisis which necessitated the closing down of some programmes, asserts that: 'Ultimately, the main basis for the identification of a unit for removal was its lack of centrality to the primary role and mission of the University' (p. 149). In a survey of

the impact of financial reductions on British universities 1981–84, John Sizer points out that Salford and Aston, two of the hardest hit universities 'undertook strategic reviews of their philosophy and structure and fundamental reviews of their portfolio of courses' (p. 560) before producing their plans. Leaving aside the very vexed question as to whether it is appropriate in our circumstances to consider closing down any part of our existing operation, we should presumably take cognisance of the view that the closing down of courses is only academically defensible when related to the university's central mission, and is not academically defensible simply in terms of a supposed cost-benefit analysis expressed in such indices as Weighted Student/Staff Ratios.

*   *   *   *

This brings me to the question of normative models in university planning — highly germane to this paper because the 'Short Term Plan' would appear to have been based on one such model, and because other South African universities are bound to be tempted to apply corporate planning strategies in their attempts to cope with the current subsidy crisis.

A good deal has been written about attempts to apply corporate planning strategy, often based on normative models, to tertiary education. Mark Easterby-Smith points to a distinction to be found in the academic world, in perceptions of corporate strategy, between those who discuss strategy in 'normative' terms — 'focusing on the models and techniques which are intended to tell managers what they ought to do' — and those who 'take a more "descriptive" orientation to the way that strategies actually evolve in practice'. He argues that the 'normative' models are those that tend to be taught in the classroom because they ' . . . are rigorously logical, give precise answers and reduce the complexity of life to something that can be analysed quantitatively,' but adds that 'unfortunately they are not terribly useful in helping people deal with future situations that are complex and unpredictable' (Easterby-Smith, p. 42).

One such normative model is the Boston Consulting Group's (BCG) 'product-portfolio matrix' from which the 'cash cow' terminology is derived. It provides a simple classification of the range of products that a company produces according to their share of a particular market, and the rate at which the market is growing. In essence this involves classifying products according to where they fall in the matrix ('Cash Cows' have a high market share where there is a low market growth rate) and then getting rid of those, called 'Dogs' in the terminology of the BCG, with a low market share where there is also a low market growth rate.

Easterby-Smith comments as follows:

> Inevitably the BCG Matrix has attracted a lot of academic criticism. The bland simplicity of the matrix conceals a lot of assumptions and problems. In practice it is very hard indeed to define and measure market share appropriately; the model assumes rather more stability in the environment than is wise; in contrast to the model, there are several reasons why it may be harmful to dispose of Dogs, etc . . . As is so often the case with ideas that attract academic criticism, the BCG matrix has been enormously popular amongst senior managers.
>
> (Easterby-Smith, pp. 44-5.)

Leaving aside the question of whether it is appropriate to equate the education of students with the manufacture of products, if the BCG matrix is inappropriate in the North American and UK contexts because it assumes more stability in the environment than is wise, it should presumably be greeted with a great deal more scepticism in Southern Africa where any assumption of stability must be highly questionable. Serious doubts must also be raised about the applicability of a matrix which has market growth rate as one of its axes in a context in which there is an artificial politically-imposed moratorium on the market growth rate, a moratorium which must be transient and must give way sooner or later to an unprecedented explosion in the market.

Easterby-Smith concludes that 'The problem with using normative models such as these is that they have clear value assumptions built into them which may be greatly at variance with those of the academic world' (p. 44).

Kelly and Shaw, in a 1987 article comparing corporate planning strategies of manufacturing industry in Australia with those of tertiary educational institutions in Victoria, cite five articles published between 1983 and 1986 as basis for the view that: 'Academe should be even more wary of introducing strategic planning than it has been to date, because, just as there seems to be a significant thrust into strategic planning by academic institutions the corporate sector is seriously questioning the role of corporate planning and its relationship with overall performance' (Kelly & Shaw, p. 333). The value of planning lies for them not in the plan produced but in the process of producing it: 'Participants in the planning process develop a shared understanding and commitment to action that will align the internal organizational conditions of the institution to the external environmental variables' (p. 334). To the extent that the university subsidy is not the only external environmental variable which is relevant to a university's vision of its future, one can only agree.

One might also usefully take note of James Lennertz's conclusion in a 1984 article in the journal *Liberal Education*:

> The rise of higher education as modern instructional organisation prevents the development of the community of inquiry. Administrative leadership, on the marketplace model ... results in the inhibition of collegial solidarity, the trivialization of non-organizational purpose and values, excessive responsiveness to non-academic pressures, and ultimately the dehumanization of the educational experience. Higher education becomes less an organic communal dialogue with purpose than a mechanical, bureaucratic enterprise with functions.
>
> (Lennertz, p. 124.)

Easterby-Smith concludes his analysis of the place of corporate strategy in university planning with the caveat: '... those in higher education should be suspicious of the management pundits who claim they have the answer — especially if it simply involves management structures and systems that are believed to be commonplace in industry' (p. 50).

*   *   *   *

The magic word in planning is 'efficiency' — but what does one actually mean by 'efficiency'? It would appear from the literature that organizational effectiveness or 'efficiency' is generally approached from two perspectives. Firstly, an external one which focuses on the achievement of the organisation's stated goals; the achievement of 'operative' goals; the acquisition of resources from the environment and the return from the organisation to its environment. Secondly, the internal functioning of the organisation, to which there are two dimensions: the internal processes (structures and operations) of the organisation, and the satisfaction of the organisation's members.

D.M. Yorke identifies four domains of institutional effectiveness in higher education: external adaptation; morale; academic orientation and extracurricular commitment (p. 12). On the basis of an extensive literature survey, he concludes that the level of morale, the satisfaction of the organisation's members, is a key measure of the organisation's effectiveness. In other words any planning process dedicated to increasing the efficiency of an institution which does not take the greatest possible care with respect to staff morale will itself, ironically, be undermining what it imagines it is contributing towards: the effectiveness and efficiency of the institution. Dennison also concludes: 'The strength of the university is its faculty, and erosion of faculty morale extracts an unacceptable price' (p. 142).

K. Cameron, in a 1983 survey of 40 higher education institutions in the north eastern United States, found that the colleges which had experienced decline in terms of their ability to attract students were those which perceived the external environment as lean in resources and were rated low on morale. The declining colleges were, ironically, seen to be superior in matters of efficiency: 'Top administrators emphasised budgetary and fiscal concerns ... whereas they gave little attention to interaction with external constituencies through public relations or public service.' Cameron interpreted his findings as indicating that 'defensive preoccupations ... with internal efficiency, are likely to contribute to institutional decline' (cited D.M. Yorke, p. 13).

Salford was one of the British universities worst hit by University Grants Committee cuts in 1981. Its planning process in response to the crisis is generally regarded by commentators as having been successful; this success is seen as being due in some measure to the fact that in formulating an academic plan for the University two principles were adopted and put into practice:

> (a) it was postulated from the beginning what whatever plan was finally adopted had to be one which was broadly accepted by the majority of staff in the academic sector as being the best that could be produced within the constraints of the situation;
>
> (b) in order to gain broad acceptance for the plan, staff had to be given an opportunity to participate in its formulation at every stage: no relevant information should be confined to any 'inner' group and it should be demonstrated that constructive criticism could affect the nature of the final outcome.
>
> (Yorke, p. 15.)

Two factors seem particularly important with regard to morale. Firstly openness. If it is going to be claimed that planning will, for example, 'cost our activities properly so that we are aware of both the income generated by an activity as well as the true costs associated with it' (STP, p. 7) then that is what should be done. If one is going to retain credibility one must develop indices which cannot be interpreted as suppressing any of the true costs, even if one regards those not taken into account by the indices (such as equipment and supplies and services, by the WSSR) as not particularly significant.

Secondly, and this overlaps the first point, one should give the people on whose behalf one is planning credit for being both adult and intelligent. Morale will be undermined rather than safeguarded by telling university staff that the process of 'abolishing several hundred posts spread across academic departments, administration and the service divisions' will make their university 'leaner, more efficient and ultimately better'. I

respond to that in exactly the same way that I would respond to the
General Editor of the Readers Digest Condensed Books if he were
to tell me that he had condensed *War and Peace* or *Bleak House*
and thereby produced leaner, more efficient and better novels.
'Leaner' certainly. But 'more efficient'? and 'better'?

The literature I have read on overseas experience never tries to
claim, even where it is guardedly enthusiastic about the planning
processes that have taken place, that the relevant institutions are
'better' in the abstract than they were. It is sometimes felt that they
are serving their communities more appropriately than they were,
as a result of the reappraisal of their missions which the financial
crises forced on them; more often they are held simply to be
'stronger' than they were — which usually appears to mean little
more than that they are less reliant on public-sector funding.

Claiming that we will be a 'better' university if we shed a few
hundred posts seems highly questionable in terms not only of an
overall assessment of the potential contribution properly-funded
universities could make to the community, but also in political and
tactical terms. It amounts to saying that government cuts are a
good thing, and that we have been profligate with public funds in
the past — which I think is far from the truth, certainly in the
academic sphere. In a situation in which irrational government
policies — military and constitutional — in defence of segregation
and white privilege can be held directly responsible for the
shortage of funding we suffer from, it seems little short of craven to
lie down and invite government to kick us further into shape with
more subsidy cuts in the interests of still greater 'efficiency'.

Claiming that we will become a better university by getting rid of
academic staff is, in any case, highly problematic in a context in
which, certainly at the University of Natal, there is as yet no
mechanism whereby it is possible to arrive at an objective
assessment of which staff the University could most afford to lose
in terms of teaching ability or lack of it.

There might also be something to be learnt in this respect from
Olswang's experience at the University of Washington:

> While the 1979–83 budget reduction process was difficult and
> traumatic to the institution, the University came out stronger because
> of it. In implementing dramatic reductions, the University was able to
> reduce its size without sacrificing quality. By preserving tenure,
> despite its legal authority to remove faculty, the administration was
> able to maintain the faith of the faculty in the process, an essential
> component to institutional self-respect.
>
> (Olswang, p. 153.)

Washington University, which had the legal right to declare

redundancies, declined to do so on the grounds that it would be a better university if it maintained the loyalty of its staff.

*   *   *   *

No worthwhile planning exercise, I would argue, can be based simply on an inward looking examination of the status quo, on an income versus expenditure analysis of what we are doing at present — which doesn't even come close to being a cost-benefit analysis. How, to cite just one example, does one assess the manifest public relations benefits accruing from Performing Arts departments? The road to efficiency and excellence cannot be measured in the simplistic normative terms of bald Weighted Student/Staff Ratios.

To give some indication of the inappropriateness of taking such statistical norms as the supreme arbiters in university planning, one has only to look at the kind of consideration, central to a university's function, which is left out of the reckoning when one does so. Take the hypothetical, and possibly extreme, example of the need to choose between the rival claims of 500 Athenian merchants and Socrates. One could debate at length as to who had contributed more to Athenian society, Socrates or the merchants; one could also argue as to who had made the more important contribution to Western Civilisation. A plan for a University in Athens in the 5th century BC would have to be based on the prior assessment of whether merchants or philosophers were more important to the future of Athens if it couldn't afford them both. Weighted Student/Staff Ratios would not begin to address the issue adequately.

It could probably be regarded as 'leaner' and more 'efficient' to use very limited staff resources to turn out 500 merchants with degrees in Business Administration than to turn out one Philosopher. But would the 'better' university be the one which produced Socrates or the one which produced the nameless merchants? Is one really expected to accept that we would be becoming a 'better' University if we put our energy into producing the 500 merchants and closed down the Philosophy Department — thereby closing down our University's department in the one discipline that has been most central to studies in the Humanities for three thousand years, and thereby not only depriving ourselves of the opportunity to produce a Socrates, but also, more to the point, depriving ourselves of the chance of producing a few dozen critically-minded graduates? Are we really going to put Socrates and the merchants in the balance and try to convince ourselves that the route to excellence and international reputation is to ditch Socrates? And do we pat ourselves on the backs for producing a better Universitas as we offer the hemlock to the philosophers,

consoling ourselves, should we have any qualms, with the thought
that it was the unanswerable and objective logic of the Weighted
Student/Staff Ratio that forced us to do it?

To sum up, then, if they are going to avoid being counter-
productive, there seem to me to be two essentials to any planning
exercises our universities may find themselves having to embark
on:

(1) Plans must be based on a prior vision of where the university is
    headed. The university must define its mission very precisely
    in relation to the various constituencies it serves. Vague
    statements about 'academic excellence' and 'serving the
    community' are not a firm enough platform for an exercise
    which could permanently vitiate our universities' ability to
    respond appropriately to the needs of their respective regions
    over the next quarter of a century.

(2) Planning must involve members of staff at every level and
    must at all costs avoid being destructive of staff morale.[2] If a
    university plan destroys morale it will itself be contributing to
    ineffectiveness and inefficiency and making the cherished goal
    of more efficient and better universities ever more difficult to
    attain.

University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.

NOTES

1. This is an amended version of a speech delivered at the University Forum
   lecture at the University of Natal, Durban on 25th August 1988, as part of a
   debate on University Planning. An abridged version, with the speech made by
   the other participant, Professor A.D.M. Walker, was published in *NU Digest*,
   9, 8 (September 1988), pp. 8–11.
2. A measure of just how seriously the destruction of staff morale needs to be
   taken can be obtained from an article on the front page of the *Times Higher
   Educational Supplement* of August 19, 1988. The article gives an account of
   demands being made by the Association of University Teachers in Britain that
   stress counselling services for staff be set up urgently in universities facing
   major re-organization. These demands follow the suicides of two lecturers at
   the University of Aberdeen the previous week (by no means the first
   University cuts-related suicides, as the article points out). One of the lecturers
   who committed suicide believed his post to be threatened by cuts; the other
   was due to transfer to another university in 1989 when the Aberdeen Classics
   Department closes.

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A NOTE ON 'THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP' AND THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NIGHT PIECE

by R.S. EDGECOMBE

Steven Marcus, in his suggestive account of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, has drawn attention to its obsessive concern with death, and observed how 'over and beyond Nell's sadness and despair, and out of all these scenes of death and dissolution, emerges something that for the want of a better term we might call spiritual necrophilia. Nell's itinerary seems to include every churchyard in which some mute inglorious Milton lies buried, and she never fails to take her morning stroll within the precincts of one of them'.[1] Marcus's passing allusion to Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard', far from being a casual embellishment, gestures toward a tradition that, whether on the level of conscious art or not, empowers the 'necrophiliac' concerns of the novel, and provides a starting point for this note.

The very first sentence of *The Old Curiosity Shop* brings the eighteenth-century nocturnal to mind — 'Although I am an old man, night is generally my time for walking'.[2] That concessive adverb, while it might have been necessary for readers in 1840 (for whom the night-piece would have been an obsolete or moribund genre), could have been dispensed with a century or so before. Old men (more so than young) would have been very likely to entertain thoughts of mortality, and night was the time, sanctified by Milton's 'Il Penseroso', most conducive to their entertainment. So it is that in her poem, 'A Nocturnal Reverie', Anne, Countess of Winchelsea, utters a wish to be abroad at night because

> . . . the free Soul to a compos'dness charm'd,
> Finding the Elements of Rage disarm'd,
> O'er all below a solemn Quiet grown,
> Joys in th'inferiour World, and thinks it like her own.[3]

Night elides the celestial and the worldly by quieting the restlessness of earth, as well as its drive toward verbal utterance ('Rage' must be taken to include *furor poeticus* as well), and cancels all intractable evidence to the effect that the earth is not heaven after all. A variant of this idea forms part of the narrator's rationale for his night walks in *The Old Curiosity Shop*:

> The glare and hurry of broad noon are not adapted to idle pursuits like mine; a glimpse of passing faces caught by the light of a street lamp, or a shop window, is often better for my purpose than their full revelation in the daylight; and, if I must add the truth, night is kinder

in this respect than day, which too often destroys an air-built castle at the moment of its completion, without the least ceremony or remorse. (p. 1)

True, the speaker is less concerned with the dead than with the living, yet he is obsessed with 'speculating' about the crowds, and those speculations must inevitably have a metaphysical extension, fostered more by half lights than by illuminating reason. The shaping impulse behind the novel soon directs the tenor of the speaker's thoughts, however, through a modulatory image of living death ('as if he were condemned to lie, dead but conscious, in a noisy churchyard, and had no hope of rest for centuries to come!'), to the following description of the Thames. Once again the reference to evening is not simply a contingent detail:

Then, the crowds forever passing and repassing on the bridges (on those which were free of toll at least), where many stop on fine evenings looking listlessly down upon the water, with some vague idea that by-and-by it runs between green banks which grow wider and wider until at last it joins the broad vast sea — where some halt to rest from heavy loads, and think, as they look over the parapet, that to smoke and lounge away one's life, and lie sleeping in the sun upon a hot tarpaulin, in a dull, slow, sluggish barge, must be happiness unalloyed — and where some, and a very different class, pause with heavier loads than they, remembering to have heard or read in some old time, that drowning was not a hard death, but of all means of suicide the easiest and best. (pp. 1–2)

Evening suspends the concourse of business, and enables the spectators to moralise the Thames in such a way that it comes to exemplify the extinction of life in death, a notion clipped and held firm by the archetype of eternity as a 'broad vast sea'. Even thoughts which do not tend deathward cannot escape being coloured by this idea, so that the barge, by infection of such Lethean adjectives as 'Dull, slow, sluggish', brings Charon's to mind. In his 'Night-Piece on Death', Thomas Parnell similarly allegorises a lake as the Stygian boundary between life and death, and so evokes Hades through the sinister *silence* of water that is none the less mobile enough to 'lave':

The Grounds that on the right aspire,
In dimness from the View retire:
The Left presents a Place of Graves,
Whose Wall the silent Water laves.

(Peake, pp. 82–83)

When Nell leads the narrator to the curiosity shop on one of his

nocturnal jaunts, his first impression of the grandfather has its provenance in meditative night pieces, since he tells us that the 'haggard aspect of the little old man was wonderfully suited to the place; he might have groped among old churches, and tombs, and deserted houses, and gathered all the spoils with his own hands'. (Dickens, p. 5) In this way he is made to figure as time or death, recurrent obsessions of the graveyard poets, as even a single line from Gray — 'Rich with the spoils of time' — will show. The narrator is accordingly prompted to one of his flights of fancy, this time centring on Little Nell herself:

> 'It would be a curious speculation,' said I, after some restless turns across and across the room, 'to imagine her in her future life, holding her solitary way among a crowd of wild grotesque companions; the only pure, fresh, youthful object in the throng. It would be curious to find —'
> I checked myself here, for the theme was carrying me along with it at a great pace, and I already saw before me a region which I was little disposed to enter. (p. 13)

The aposiopesis, the rhetorical breaking off, suggests recoil, the reluctance of the imagination to encompass the image, implicit in this line of thought, of Death and the Maiden. And it is not irrelevant to recall that in the Schubert setting of the Claudius lyric in question, Death sings a lullaby as he embraces the Maiden, so bringing an implicit night upon the scene. In similar vein, Dickens ends the chapter with a proleptic image of Nell's own death, couched as that is in a metaphor of sleep, and placed in a setting that also places the gothick past against a vernal present:

> I had, ever before me, the old dark murky rooms — the gaunt suits of mail with their ghostly silent air — the faces all awry, grinning from wood and stone — the dust, and rust, and worm that lives in wood — and alone in the midst of all this lumber and decay and ugly age, the beautiful child in her gentle slumber, smiling through her light and sunny dreams. (p. 14)

Although no specifically verbal echoes resonate between this picture and 'Night III' of Young's epic extension of the night piece, the early death of Narcissa in 'Night Thoughts' cues in a similar contrast between a vulnerable life and a harsh, unaccommodating world:

> It call'd Narcissa long before her hour;
> It call'd her tender soul, by break of bliss,
> From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;
> Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves

> In this unclement clime of human life.
> Sweet harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!
> And young as beautiful! and soft as young!
> And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!
> And happy (if aught happy here) as good![4]

When the *ad hoc* narrator dissolves away from *The Old Curiosity Shop*, and a different novel begins to rise from the dismantled scaffolding of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, Nell gives up her 'light and sunny dreams', and supplants him as nocturnal contemplative:

> In one of these rooms, was a window looking into the street, where the child sat, many and many a long evening, and often far into the night, alone and thoughtful. None are so anxious as those who watch and wait; at these times, mournful fancies came flocking to her mind, in crowds. (Dickens, p. 69)

This is precisely the position of the speaker in 'Night Thoughts', who, denied any restorative dreaming, is prey to the waking fancies unleashed by night:

> From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose,
> I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
> Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
> I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
> Tumultuous...
>
> *   *   *   *
>
> Through this opaque of nature, and of soul,
> This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
> To lighten and to cheer.... (Young, pp. 1 & 3)

Young's thoughts turn inexorably toward mortality:

> The bell strikes one. We take no note of time
> But from its loss. To give it then a tongue
> Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
> I feel a solemn sound. If heard aright,
> It is the knell of my departed hours: (p. 3)

So too do Nell's. Her name, a contraction of 'Ellen' — 'light' — phonetically implies the occlusion of that light in 'knell', and she is frequently the spectator of dark events. Dickens's verbs here have a frequentative, an habitual force:

> Then, she would draw in her head and look round the room and see that everything was in its place and hadn't moved; and looking into

the street again, would perhaps see a man passing with a coffin on his back, and two or three others silently following him to a house where somebody lay dead; which made her shudder and think of such things until they suggested afresh the old man's altered face and manner, and a new train of fears and speculations. (Dickens, p. 69)

Despite the obliquity of reference in that 'new train of fears and speculations', there can be no doubting the fact that they centre on death. The point of night thoughts, though, is not to indulge an appetite for gothick morbidity, but rather to accommodate the soul to the fact of death — a pacifying, not an agitating exercise. That Little Nell should 'shudder' at what she sees points, if anything, to the discomfiting *urban* context of her meditations. The city at night has almost always been conceived as a source of terror and distress. We can go back as far as Juvenal, and find him inveighing against the noisiness of Rome at night. Here there is no voluntary wakefulness in the exercise of *memento mori*:

> . . . raedarum transitus arto
> vicorum in flexu et stantis conviciae mandrae
> eripient somnum Druso vitulis marinisque.[5]

Likewise, in Book III of Gay's *Trivia*, the night piece becomes a catalogue of horrors, less gothick than everyday. Even those apocalyptic horrors so interesting to Young ('Amazing period! when each mountain-height/Outburns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour/Their melted mass, as rivers once they poured' — p. 244) have been trivialised into an urban fire:

> From Beam to Beam, the fierce Contagion spreads,
> The spiry Flames now lift aloft their Heads,
> Through the burst Sash the blazing Deluge pours,
> And splitting Tiles descend in rattling Show'rs.[6]

Gay's poem is a sort of comic *propemptikon*, a poem wishing the reader a prosperous voyage through an urban Hades, a poem about spirited survival, not about death. The cityscape cannot instil the right meditative serenity, for in its bustle the still, small voice is drowned. So, at any rate it would seem from the following extract from *The Old Curiosity Shop*, in Dickens's most febrile, prophetic manner:

> But, night-time in this dreadful spot! — night, when the smoke was changed to fire; when every chimney spirted up its flame; and places, that had veen dark vaults all day, now shone red-hot, with figures moving to and fro within their blazing jaws, and calling to one another with hoarse cries — night, when the noise of every strange machine

> was aggravated by the darkness; when the people near them looked
> wilder and more savage; ... night, which, unlike the night that
> Heaven sends on earth, brought with it no peace, nor quiet, nor signs
> of blessed sleep — who shall tell the terrors of the night to the young
> wandering child. (p. 336)

The vehement surge of the prose here gains additional irony from
the night pieces it appears to subvert. Its anaphora (clausular
repetition) inevitably brings to mind the suspended chords of the
exchange between Jessica and Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*
V.i., tied as they are by the phrase 'In such a night'. That serene
nocturne turns of course on thoughts of love and procreation,
whereas the Countess of Winchelsea's, playing on the same phrase,
has the characteristic solitude and eschatalogical tenor of the
Augustan night piece: 'In such a Night let me abroad remain,/Till
Morning breaks, and All's confus'd again'. (Peake, p. 40). Any
verbal echoes of this sort of placidity in Dickens's account can only
mock the notion of the night as vehicle for repose. If it is
reminiscent of anything at all, it is of the expostulative agitation we
often find in Young, who has been partly conditioned by the
Augustan horror of darkness as a symbol of unreason. His
Darkness, after all, is pictured in terms not dissimilar from those
that Pope uses to evoke Dullness:

> Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne
> In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
> Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world. (Young, p. 2)

Young's night thoughts are seldom temperate; apocalyptic
terrors haunt them. The same holds true of Dickens's description
here, which, instead of bringing calm of mind, all passion spent,
offers night as a prolongation of industrial day. He does this by
relying on inverted imagery — the opaque smoke is transmuted to
the hectic radiance of fire, dark vaults to red-hot chambers — and
in the process forging Dantesque symbols of torment which we can
juxtapose with the following passage from Young:

> Dost thou not know, my new astronomer!
> Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man?
> Man, turning from his God, brings endless night,
> Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,
> Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
> How deep the darkness! and the groan how loud!
> And far, how far, from lambent are the flames! —
>   (Young, p. 303)

As if to point the dissociation of urban night from pastoral evening

(which we find evoked by such Poets of Sensibility as Gray and Collins), Dickens parodies the rural imagery of harvest to stress the infertile, feverish temper of night life in the city:

> ... night, when carts came rumbling by, filled with rude coffins (for contagious disease and death had been busy with living crops); ...
>
> (Dickens, p. 336)

Such life-in-death is obviously continuous, though it is rather more luridly and stridently set forth, with the image of the immured man agonised by the noise of the city at the start of the novel: 'think of the hum and noise being always present to his sense, and of the stream of life that will not stop, pouring on, on, on, through all his restless dreams, as if he were condemned to lie, dead, but conscious, in a noisy churchyard, and no hope of rest for centuries to come'. (p. 1)

A quite different tone pervades the presentation of the twilit churchyard when Nell reaches her journey's end. It is that great summation of the night piece, Gray's *Elegy*, that now becomes the shaping influence. Gone is the clamorous moral hectoring of Young, and in its place there comes a quiet pensiveness. A voluntary assent of the spirit to the inevitability of death, not a pained, resistant anguish strikes the dominant note here:

> ... the solemn presence, within, of that decay which falls on senseless things the most enduring in their nature: and, without, and round about on every side, of Death — filled her with deep and thoughtful feelings, but with none of terror or alarm. A change had been gradually stealing over her, in the time of her loneliness and sorrow. With failing strength and heightening resolution, there had sprung up a purified and altered mind; there had grown in her bosom blessed thoughts and hopes, which are the portion of few but the weak and drooping ... The old church bell rang out the hour with a mournful sound, as if it had grown sad from so much communing with the dead and unheeded warning to the living; the fallen leaves rustled; the grass stirred upon the graves; all else was still and sleeping.
>
> Some of those dreamless sleepers lay close within the shadow of the church — touching the wall, as if they clung to it for comfort and protection. Others had chose to lie beneath the changing shade of trees; others by the path, that footsteps might come near them; others, among the graves of little children ... Perhaps not one of the imprisoned souls had been quite able to separate itself in living thought from its old companion. If any had, it had still felt for it a love like that which captives have been known to bear towards the cell in which they have been long confined, and, even at parting, hung upon its narrow bounds affectionately.
>
> (pp. 388–9)

The debt to Gray here is considerable — not so much a debt of

cadences and verbal contours as of attitude and spatial detail. Just as in the *Elegy* the curfew tolls the knell of parting day, so here the old bell discharges the identical function. That equipoise of hushed suspension and mysterious illusory movement in Gray's poem — 'Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap' — seems also to prompt Dickens to the detail of the stirring grass, grass that is given further emblematic significance by the equation that Isaiah has made between it and transient flesh. Although the archetype of death as sleep is too venerable for us to limit the allusion to the *Elegy* alone, its 'rude forefathers' would be perfectly at home in the churchyard that Dickens presents here, especially since the image of natural protectiveness ('close within the shadow'; 'beneath the changing shade') has an analogue in the earlier poem — 'Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade'. The whole passage seems to denature the finality of death by suggesting its consonance with life (as manifest in freedom of choice). This must surely form a sort of conflated paraphrase and expansion of the lines 'Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,/Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires' and

> For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey
> This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
> Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
> Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?[7]

Dickens's image of the captive bodies, while it expunges the asphyxiated containment of the dead man in Chapter 1, seems to invert a simile in Parnell's 'A Night-Piece on Death', where the captive souls eagerly vacate their cell-like flesh for the liberty of resurrection:

> As men who long in Prison dwell,
> With Lamps that glimmer round the Cell,
> When e'er their suffering years are run,
> Spring forth to greet the glitt'ring sun.
>
> (Peake, p. 85)

By upending this more predictable notion, Dickens makes the graveyard a sort of *locus amoenus*, and gives a consolatory force to Nell's entering it. When she dies, the prophetically elegiac images of slumber at the start of the narrative find their fulfilment at its end, which is enriched also with those spectral angelic presences so beloved of Collins (and to a lesser extent of Gray, who speaks in a deleted stanza of the *Elegy* of 'hands unseen'):

'She is sleeping soundly,' he said; 'but no wonder. Angel hands have strewn the ground deep with snow, that the lightest footstep may be lighter yet'; (Dickens, p. 534)

Steven Marcus has pointed out how the 'hundred-odd pages of *Master Humphrey's Clock* ... indicate without the possibility of mistake that Dickens was actually trying to reinstate something that had passed, to restore himself imaginatively to an earlier recollection of spirit'. (Marcus, p. 131) The same, I believe, holds true of the novel into which that piece mutated, a fact as much evident in Dickens's tapping this eighteenth-century genre as in the Strawberry Hill gothick of its accompanying illustrations.

University of Cape Town

NOTES

1. Steven Marcus, *Dickens: From Pickwick to Dombey* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965), p. 145.
2. Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (London: Oxford Univ Press, 1951), p. 1.
3. *Poetry of the Landscape and the Night*, ed. Charles Peake (London: Edward Arnold, 1967), p. 40.
4. *The Poetical Works of Edward Young* (London: John Kendrick, 1853), p. 41.
5. *Junvenal and Persius, With an English Translation by G. Ramsey* (London: Heinemann, 1918), p. 41.
6. John Gay, *Poetry and Prose*, ed. Vinton A. Dearing and Charles E. Beckwith (London: Oxford Univ Press, 1974), 2 Vols, I, p. 170.
7. *The Poems of Gray, Collins and Goldsmith*, ed. Roger Lonsdale (London: Longman, 1969), p. 134.

LUCIFER'S FALL: FREEWILL AND THE AETIOLOGY OF EVIL IN 'PARADISE LOST'

by HAROLD P. MALTZ

In *Paradise Lost* two modes of thought co-exist which give an account of the problem of evil — the aetiological mode and the conceptual one. Both accounts purport in some sense to explain the phenomenon of evil; each has its own language, logic and set of concepts. The aetiological mode of thought, which takes the form of narrative, focuses on the origin of evil as a means of explaining it. This concern leads the narrator in *Paradise Lost* backwards in time to the beginnings of recorded historical time and from there to that which preceded it, the *Urzeit* or mythical time — so initially to the fall in Eden and the serpent of Eden and thence to the chronologically earlier fall in heaven and the angelic-demonic figure of Lucifer-Satan. The methodology of the conceptual mode of thought is radically different. The narrator in *Paradise Lost* postulates freewill whereby angels and human beings are enabled to choose between good and evil. An analysis of the concept of freewill reveals that this choice is built into it as a permanent possibility. I argue that the aetiological enquiry into evil helps determine the setting in time and place and the narrative of events in Eden and in heaven. However, the aetiological account of evil is, by its own internal logic, problematic. In contrast, the conceptual account of evil is, logically, problem-free. Yet the evidence suggests that, for the narrator, the concept of freewill functions primarily as a means of bolstering his theological argument. Only secondarily does the concept of freewill function as an element in the conceptual account of evil.

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There are many narrative sequences in *Paradise Lost* and two of them are devoted to falls, that of Lucifer in heaven and that of Adam and Eve in Eden. Yet one great argument — the justification of God's ways to mankind — pervades the entire work. Hence it is worth enquiring into the theological function in the poem of these two narratives. The narrative of Lucifer's fall in heaven implies that God is the creator and Lucifer a creature and so the narrative is anti-dualist. It also asserts that Lucifer is the first to perpetrate evil and so it is aetiological, a myth of origins. Further, the narrative exonerates God from responsibility for Lucifer's actions and so it points to the principle of freewill. The narrative of Adam and Eve's fall in Eden also postulates the principle of freewill, this time to exonerate God from responsibility

for Adam and Eve's actions. These two narratives, then, partly cover different territory and partly, what is surprising, the same. Why the duplication of narratives of fall? It is fairly evident that the narrative of Lucifer's fall supplements that of Adam and Eve which is the more fundamental, if only because the latter is the theologically important fall (important for the narrator's Christological theodicy); the fall in Eden is the one Paul philosophizes about, and on these reflections is based the doctrine of Original Sin. There are excellent dramatic, aesthetic, psychological and narrative plot reasons for the duplication of the narrative of the Edenic fall in the chronologically prior events of the heavenly fall. But the reason I wish to examine here is the aetiological one, that in the narrative of the heavenly fall the narrative poet in *Paradise Lost* presents the aetiology of evil.

Ricoeur distinguishes four types of myth concerning the origin of evil (172–174). One of these types is that of 'a "fall" of man that arises as an irrational event in a *creation already completed*' (Ricoeur, 172). In his analysis of this type of myth, Ricoeur discusses 'the Adamic myth' as narrated in Genesis (232–260). Nuttall also discusses the fall in Eden when he says of *Paradise Lost*: 'To show the justice of God's ways to man, Milton took an aetiological myth, a story purporting to account for the introduction of evil into [the] universe ...' (101). However, although the narrator in *Paradise Lost* in search of an aetiology of evil turns to the narrative in Genesis of the fall in Eden, it is evident from the text in *Paradise Lost* that he found the narrative as related in Genesis to be inadequate in this respect and so proceeded to the mythical narrative of the heavenly fall as more likely to sustain an aetiology of evil.

It is the figure of the serpent in the Genesis narrative of the fall which is problematic in an aetiology of evil. Such a figure is weak both dramatically and ontologically and too unmotivated in its temptation of Eve to satisfy the passionate curiosity into the mysterious origin of evil of those who are aetiologically minded.[1] Far from providing the answers, the temptation by the serpent of Eden in Genesis must itself be accounted for. Hence, I argue, the felt necessity by the narrator in *Paradise Lost* to seek yet an earlier and more convincing figure, and a set of events, which both account for the temptation by the serpent in Eden and are themselves capable of sustaining an aetiology of evil. Aetiological considerations, one may thus argue, must have led the author of *Paradise Lost* (or is it the narrator?) on an intertextual search, one leading further afield than the text of Genesis.

The author of *Paradise Lost* did not have to seek too far for such a figure and set of events: the book of Revelation (12: 7–9) had long since identified the serpent of Eden as Satan who, as Lucifer,

had once fallen from heaven.[2] Here was a narrative ready made
that provided the solution to Milton's problem. Indeed, Revelation
went further than required by the narrator in *Paradise Lost*; the
latter chose to preserve the separate identities of Lucifer-Satan and
the serpent of Eden, so that Satan could enter into, but remain
separate from, the serpent. (Could it be that the author of
Revelation was also aetiologically minded and had qualms about
the adequacy of the serpent of Eden? The author of Revelation
himself appears to have engaged in an intertextual search,
exploring mysterious hints in the books of Isaiah (14: 12–15) and
Ezekiel (28: 11–19) about the fall of the day-star, denoted
Lucifer.[3])

Aetiological theory seeks not merely to specify the first
occurrence of an event but also to explain that first occurrence.
Kirk has pointed out how important the category of aetiology is in
myths (257–259), and so it is not surprising that the narrator in
Paradise Lost should, for his aetiology of evil, descend into the
deep *Urzeit* of myth. Whatever the case with Genesis, events which
occurred in heaven prior to the creation of the world are not
generally regarded as within historical time. As Otzen argues,
'Myth exceeds the boundaries of history . . . Myth has its own time
. . . it consists of *Urzeit* and *Endzeit*, that which lies both before and
after historical time' (7).

In the *Urzeit* in heaven, before the creation of the world
(according to *Paradise Lost*) evil came into being: there the first act
of disobedience to God was committed — for evil was then devoid
of moral connotation — and with it Lucifer emerged as the
supernatural antagonist of heaven's king. As Said puts it, 'Satan is
the beginning . . .' (46); '. . . there can be no more irreducible
beginning . . .' (60). Ruler of a rival kingdom in hell, Lucifer-Satan
is immortal, according to the poem, until final dissolution at the
end of days. Possessing the armament of angels he cannot be
wounded, is not bound by laws of gravity and space, and is capable
of bodily transformation. The gods of the ancient pagan world are
among his followers, and his cohorts are numbered in millions.
Compared to such a mighty figure, the serpent of Eden in Genesis
is puny indeed. So Adam and Eve are more vulnerable to Satan in
Paradise Lost than they are to the serpent in Genesis. Hence, one
may argue, their fall in *Paradise Lost* though still regarded as evil,
is more understandable: they are the victims of a plot devised by an
enemy so powerful that his forces could engage heaven's in warfare
lasting three days.

The consequences in general for *Paradise Lost* of the
introduction into the poem of Satan are manifold and cannot be
discussed here. But some of the consequences in the poem for the
narrative of the fall in Eden must be mentioned, for when the

narrator represents Satan as embodied in the serpent of Eden, he significantly alters the narrative. In particular he provides the tempter with a history, from which flow both psychology and motivation, all of which are lacking in the account of the serpent's temptation in Genesis. Hence in *Paradise Lost* Satan vows revenge for his defeat and expulsion from heaven: hatred of God makes him determined to seduce the first human beings. Folklore adds that Satan literally seduces Eve (Graves, 85). But if these literary and psychological benefits for *Paradise Lost* flow from Satan in the serpent tempting Eve (rather than, as in Genesis, the serpent doing so), there are also problems in *Paradise Lost* which result from such a change. Many critics have, for example, drawn attention to the injustice of the serpent's punishment in *Paradise Lost*; some attempt to justify it. Thus Fish proclaims of the curse on the serpent: '. . . that which has been corrupted is corrupt. It is of course unjust or unfair if one considers the culpability of the serpent, but that injustice is not God's . . . in short, the innocent will suffer' (154–155). Fish is intent on justifying the epic voice of the narrator in the poem as morally infallible. Yet the text in *Paradise Lost* makes it plain that God judges the serpent for its supposed misdeed: '. . . To judgement he proceeded on the accused/Serpent . . .' (ed. Fowler, *Paradise Lost* 10: 164–165).[4] Hence, one may argue, the injustice is God's. The narrator in *Paradise Lost* has produced a muddled incident by trying simultaneously to diverge from Genesis in introducing Satan in the serpent yet remain faithful to that text by having the serpent punished — for a deed which the serpent in Genesis committed but which the serpent in *Paradise Lost* did not.

The aetiological impulse has at times led yet further backwards in time in the search for an explanation of the origin of evil, taking what from the perspective of monotheist religion is the ultimate, outrageous and (if its starting point is within a monotheist framework) heretical step — the postulation of dualism.[5] There may be other grounds for postulating dualism but its hypothesis is at least partially explicable as an attempt to provide a rationally acceptable account of evil, particularly since an aetiology of evil tends to go hand-in-hand with the hypostatization of entities. Thus Segal argues that '. . . it is not likely that any group accepted both dualism and the lack of punishment and reward at the same time' (86). As Segal observes, the dualist hypothesis attempts to reconcile the evil and imperfection of the world with the goodness and perfection posited of God (14).

It is obvious that the narrator in *Paradise Lost* does not subscribe to dualism, for Lucifer is an angel created by God, not an eternally co-existent power, and indeed he debates this very issue with Abdiel (*PL* 5: 853–895). One of the functions of the battle in

heaven is, as Abdiel points out, to reveal Lucifer's grievous and arrogant error in claiming equality with God. Yet in spite of not accepting the theological claims of dualism, the narrator in *Paradise Lost* is nonetheless able to make use of its logic. For the fall in Eden demonstrates that, to Adam and Eve, Satan is an extremely dangerous and formidable enemy in whom, for the human being, evil is henceforth located. Satan, the declared enemy of God, becomes in seeking vengeance the powerful opponent of mankind, one remarkable for his brilliance, ingenuity and persistence.

The aetiological impulse tends to be — must be — expressed in narrative form: there is a chronological sequence of events and the notion of causality is operative. In most aetiological narratives the protagonist is only important in bringing into being a new state of affairs. The new phenomenon may last for ever, but the protagonist lives his or her day and dies. In the narrative of Lucifer's fall in *Paradise Lost*, the protagonist not only brings into being a new phenomenon but forever fosters it. Satan functions as tempter in Eden but persists thereafter as a principle of evil, antagonist of God, enemy of mankind; he and his cohorts are represented as free to roam the earth until the prophetic days climaxing human history. Hence the possibility, mentioned above, of the narrative poet in *Paradise Lost* making use of the logic of dualism although not accepting its theological claims.

It may be wondered why the narrator in *Paradise Lost* chooses to narrate the events of the Edenic as well as those of the heavenly fall if the latter provides a better aetiology of evil than the former. But not only is the Edenic fall the more fundamental and theologically the more important one (as has been suggested above): one may further suggest that, among other reasons, the narrator was attracted to the Edenic fall because it provided him with another aetiology — that of the so-called human condition. Many critics have commented on the density of the narrative of the Edenic fall in Genesis which provides aetiologies of many phenomena, among them (on a Christian reading) the notion of Original Sin, which doctine purports to explain the change in 'human nature' wrought by the fall of Adam and Eve. Hence *Paradise Lost* dramatizes two falls which represent disobedience to the divine behest and which function symbiotically.

In *Paradise Lost* the heavenly fall is an excellent narrative in its own right; it also helps explain to a remarkable extent the fall (if not the punishments) in Eden and so it in general enriches the poem. However, the function of the heavenly fall exceeds these undoubted benefits: Lucifer's fall is supposed to provide an aetiology of evil and so, by definition, explain that phenomenon. But does that narrative succeed in explaining the origin of evil? For

unless the heavenly fall be cited as more than the chronologically first example of evil, one must conclude that that narrative is not capable of sustaining an aetiology of evil — that its supposed explanation still remains problematic. True, the aetiological narrative shifts from Eden to heaven prior to the creation, and shifts its focus from the antagonist serpent to the chronologically first antagonist, Lucifer. Nonetheless one may argue that in *Paradise Lost* the aetiological narrative of the heavenly fall is a self-subverting one, for although it helps explain why Eve falls, it does not explain why Lucifer himself falls. For if the tempter serpent in Eden has to be aggrandized in *Paradise Lost* by its embodiment of Satan, and if such a presence is needed to explain why Eve falls, then how is Lucifer's fall without a tempter to be explained? Worse, the narrative of Lucifer's fall which initially helps explain why Eve falls, subsequently subverts that very explanation. For as it becomes clear that Lucifer falls without a tempter representing a prior manifestation of evil, so it becomes evident that Adam and Eve may also fall without a tempter — without even the serpent (as in Genesis) let alone Satan embodied in the serpent (as in *Paradise Lost*). Hence it is evident that if the serpent of Eden in Genesis cannot sustain an aetiology of evil neither can the narrative of the heavenly fall of Lucifer as related in *Paradise Lost*: the shift of protagnist, scene and time from the serpent of Eden to Lucifer in heaven is self-defeating as far as the aetiology of evil is concerned. Hence the portrayals in *Paradise Lost* of Lucifer falling and of Satan tempting are, in aetiological terms, logically dispensable, notwithstanding Satan's provision with history, psychology and motivation. The self-subversion in *Paradise Lost* of the aetiology of evil but reveals the necessity in that text of the concept of freewill.

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If the aetiology of evil tends to narrative, the conceptual account of evil invites neither aetiology nor narrative. It is indeed strange to find two totally different accounts of evil in a text, for it is unlikely that the same mind would set out to produce more than one. Nevertheless, co-existing in *Paradise Lost* with the aetiological narrative of the origin of evil is an account involving the concept of freewill — an account that may be extrapolated alike from the Edenic and the heavenly falls. Such an account postulates that an analysis of the concept of freewill reveals the permanent possibility of choice of good and evil to be built into the concept: a will is not free unless it has such a choice. (As mentioned above, in the falls in Eden and in heaven the terms 'good' and 'evil' are devoid of moral connotation and instead denote obedience or disobedience to divine commands.) I suggest that since the text is a theodicy aiming

at the justification of God's ways, the account of evil involving freewill is given because of the contribution — the necessity — to the theodicy of the concept of freewill. Freewill is vital to the narrator's conception of an omnipotent and benevolent deity (whether or not the portrayal of such a deity is successfully executed). The account of evil involving freewill is, therefore, a secondary function of freewill.

In *Paradise Lost*, freewill plays its vital role in the narratorial theodicy by countering the implied argument, common to both dualist and monotheist, that the creator, having produced all creatures, is therefore responsible for the moral quality — often evil and destructive — of their actions. In support of this argument the dualist postulates two uncreated and eternal deities, one benevolent, the other malevolent: the actions of Satan or other embodiment of evil are thus held to be the responsibility of the evil deity. The monotheist who holds the creator responsible for the creature's actions would, by the same token, hold God to blame for Satan's misdeeds, and hence for the Edenic fall, the tempter there taken to be Satan. The end of this argument is generally that God lacks benevolence or omnipotence. Yet some critics commenting on *Paradise Lost* assert that this argument is put forward by the narrator, a claim which is contrary to the tenets of the poem. As Fish concludes, after examining a number of such critical writings, '. . . these arguments represent slightly different paths to the same conclusion: God, not Adam and Eve, is guilty of the Fall . . .' (210).

To forestall, or to reply to this implied argument, whether of the dualist or monotheist, the narrator propounds the doctrine of angelic and human freewill. In this respect *Paradise Lost* makes explicit and gives prominence to a principle implicit in Genesis — human freewill. (In Genesis how could any divine commandment be given Adam and Eve but on the assumption that they are as free to disobey as obliged to obey?)

The importance given in *Paradise Lost* to the principle of freewill points to its necessity as an element in the narratorial argument, the end of which is the justification of God's ways to mankind. Freewill both limits the area of divine responsibility, and makes possible an area of angelic and human responsibility: if the creator is to be exculpated from responsibility for the acts of angels and humans, such a release must be justified by the reciprocal emphasis on angelic and human responsibility for action. So the theological function of freewill is to delimit, to legislate in an area of conflict. On the one hand freewill exonerates God from blame for the evils perpetrated by angels and humans and on the other hand it assigns blame to Satan, Adam, Eve — to fallen angels and humans. (By the doctrine of Original Sin blame is in turn imputed to all human beings, but whether this doctrine is consistent with the

principle of freewill is a topic beyond the scope of this article.) As mentioned, the principle of freewill implies the permanent possibility of good and evil behaviour. In the words of Fish, 'The ability not to fall depends on the ability to fall: freewill is a meaningless concept unless the possibility of wrong choice exists' (210, fn 1). Thus freewill entails moral autonomy whereby angels or humans, albeit created, are themselves agents capable of initiating a casual sequence of events, a sequence which is therefore not initiated by their creator and for which they alone are responsible.

Of the numerous (more than a dozen) passages expounding on or alluding to freewill in *Paradise Lost*, the most important is God's explanation of the significance of the concept (3: 93–132). Accordingly, when God predicts Adam's fall and comments, 'Whose fault?/Whose but his own?' (3: 96–97), he rejects the notion that the creator is responsible for the actions of created beings. Instead God conceives of Adam and Eve as morally autonomous agents who are responsible for their actions. To assert creation, then, is not to deny moral autonomy to created beings. It is not to assert it either: whether or not a creature is a morally autonomous agent depends upon the manner of its creation. Thus humans and angels are morally autonomous, while animals are not. The notion of moral autonomy is again implied in God's comment on creatures driven by necessity and so deprived of freewill: 'What praise could they receive?' (3: 106). Moral autonomy entails moral responsibility, and hence praise or blame for one's behaviour. In further comments on the fallen angels, God quite explicitly rejects the creator's responsibility for their deeds: they cannot 'justly accuse/Their maker, or their making ...' (3: 112–113). The notion of creatures who 'decreed/Their own revolt' (3: 116–117) and who are 'authors to themselves in all/Both what they judge and what they choose' (3: 122–123) makes equally explicit that creatures are morally autonomous agents who have the capacity to determine their own actions and so, since actions are praiseworthy or blameable, to determine their own fate.

Accordingly, God instructs Raphael to communicate to Adam his possession of the gift of freewill (5: 524–540). God's order is that Raphael stress to Adam that his happiness is 'in his power .../Left to his own freewill' (5: 235–236); thereby God exculpates himself, although creator, from responsibility for Adam's freely chosen fall. Raphael duly informs Adam: 'thine and of all thy sons/The weal or woe in thee is placed ...' (8: 637–638). Satan too discourses at length on freewill (4: 58–72) and even the fallen angels debate the concept (2: 557–561).

The postulate of freewill is at the same time a moral principle

(indeed, the pre-condition of all subsequent moral principles) and, as presented by the narrator, one of the definitive characteristics of human beings and angels. On the one hand it distinguishes mankind from animals and automatons, creatures who possess no, or only severely constrained, freedom of choice, capable of doing 'only what they needs must do, .../Not what they would' (3: 105–106). Such, says God, 'had served necessity,/Not me' (3: 110–111). On the other hand, freewill makes of mankind the kin of angels so that, Adam and Eve having been created 'Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,' God adds: 'Such I created all th' ethereal powers/And spirits . . .'(3: 99–101). It may be argued that freewill goes further and establishes human kinship with God who is also obviously portrayed as free ('. . . necessity and chance/Approach not me, and what I will is fate' (7: 172–173)). Hence the text suggests that, whatever else is meant by the notion of human beings having been created in the image of God, possession of freewill is one of its important elements.[6] Thus freewill is represented as a heavenly attribute freely endowed to human beings, an extension of divine freedom to created beings rather than a reduction in divine freewill or powers.

In *Paradise Lost*, God's pronouncement on Adam's freewill, and by implication Eve's, not only associates human freewill with angelic and divine freewill, but at the same time tackles a traditional major obstacle to freewill — that divine omniscience entails creaturely predestination. Hence God first mentions the Edenic fall in the future tense ('. . . so will fall,/He . . .') (3: 95–96) and in the next sentence comments on human freewill: 'I made him just and right,/Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall' (3: 98–99). In the lengthy passage which ensues God both justifies his creation of creaturely freewill ('Not free, what proof could they have given sincere/Of true allegiance . . .') and demonstrates that omniscience is consistent with freewill: 'If I foreknew,/Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault . . .' (3: 100–128). This succinct formula which the narrator attributes to God is sufficient to reconcile both divine omniscience (foreknowledge, prediction) and creaturely freewill. One may therefore argue that in *Paradise Lost* the concept of freewill furthers the traditional conception of the deity as benevolent, omnipotent and omniscient and so is a vital element in the theodicy which the narrative poet in *Paradise Lost* declares to be his undertaking.

To those that assume that every event and action has a cause, the notion of freewill is self-contradictory, and statements about the free choice in Eden are thus involved in infinite regression. St. Augustine argues as follows: 'Our first parents fell into disobedience because already they were secretly corrupted; for the

evil act had never been done had not an evil will preceded it' (from *City of God,* quoted in Nuttall, 103). Nuttall himself argues in similar fashion: 'To depart from God's will would be to misuse one's freedom, and this they could have done only if they were already tainted' (101). But what made Adam and Eve 'corrupted' and 'tainted' prior to their fall? The fall in Eden is an act of free choice, but if that be denied, a causal analysis will not prove more adequate. Besides, it is logically erroneous to suppose that the language of freewill with its concepts of choice and intention is continous with the language of causality with its notion that every event has a cause: these languages and concepts belong to differing categories of analysis.[7] As has been pointed out, if one cannot fall then one is not free: such a will would be programmed to obedience. The free will is free to choose between obedience and disobedience to divine commands as it is between good and evil.

I have argued that in *Paradise Lost* the narrator, intending to justify the ways of God, produces an aetiological account of evil. Aetiological considerations, among them the problem of evil, determine the settings in place and time of the narratives of the fall in Eden and the chronologically prior fall in heaven. The central figure of evil in this account is the heavenly Lucifer who doubles as the tempter Satan in Eden. But there are two accounts of evil in *Paradise Lost* and it is unlikely that the same mind would set out to produce more than one. The evidence suggests that the conceptual account of evil was produced almost inadvertently, for its central concept — freewill — functions primarily as an element in the narratorial theodicy and only secondarily as an element in an account of evil: freewill bolsters the narratorial argument that God who created living beings is not to blame for their evil. For if chance is ruled out in a morally ordered universe then some other being or beings must be responsible for evil. Hence the account of evil in terms of freewill, for evil is and must forever remain a possibility of choice for the will which is free. The conceptual account of evil dispenses with figures of evil and tempters: they are part of the poem but they need not be part of the conceptual account of evil. The conceptual account is logically problem-free whereas the aetiological account is problematic and self-subverting.

In *Paradise Lost* the categories of aetiological and conceptual modes of thought do not clash with one another because they do not meet: they both purport to explain yet they are not rivals. In fact these modes of thought correspond roughly to Ricoeur's distinction of the pre-philosophical and the philosophical: Ricoeur draws attention to 'the power of the myth to evoke *speculation*' (236). Hence the co-existence in *Paradise Lost* of two accounts of

evil points to the co-existence in the narrator of the modes of poet and philosopher.

University of Natal
Durban

NOTES

1. On the basis of the serpent's lack of motive in the Genesis narrative (Frazer, 78), Frazer devises an ingenious theory of Genesis being based on an earlier narrative.
2. Ricoeur's four types of myth concerning the origin of evil do not seem to accommodate the narrative of Lucifer's fall in heaven.
3. See Graves, 57–59.
4. All further references to *Paradise Lost* (*PL*) are given in parentheses in the text.
5. As Segal points out, dualism is of two sorts, one involving complementary, the other involving opposing powers (x, 149–150). In this article, dualism implies opposing powers only.
6. Obviously the notion of the image of God is open to many other interpretations.
7. On categories of analysis, see Ryle, 8–11.

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CORRESPONDENCE
'OPPOSING APARTHEID: DEMOCRATS AGAINST THE LENINISTS'

The Editors,
Theoria.

In *Theoria* 71 Mervyn Frost sounds an important and timely warning about the dangers inherent in a Leninist politics. I have no quarrel with that warning, except to wonder whether Poland and South Africa are as comparable as he seems to assume. At a **theoretical** level, however, Frost's article makes certain assumptions about Marxism and politics which cannot go unchallenged. In this regard I wish to raise two issues: first, the relationship between Marx and Lenin, and second, Frost's counterposing of what seems to be conceived of as a distinctively **non-Marxist** account of state, bureaucracy and politics (derived from Weber) to an allegedly **Marxist** account. I want to suggest that neither of these issues is nearly so unproblematic as Frost presents it.

1. In the article the linkage between Marx and Lenin is made, implicitly, in two ways. The first is a reference to 'Marxist/Leninist' autocracy. The second is implied in Frost's appeal to Polan's *Lenin and the End of Politics*. Now, with regard to the first linkage, it must be granted that the term 'Marxism-Leninism' can refer, in some senses, to something that is neither Marxism nor Leninism but an institutional and highly distorted hybrid of the two, in the form of the official doctrine of the CPSU. But this does not seem to be the sense in which Frost intends the term. The issue here is not the substitution of a slash for a hyphen, but the extended reference to *The State and Revolution* as a work of Marxist theory. This is borne out by the second linkage, the use of Polan's commentary on Lenin's text; for Polan takes *The State and Revolution* to be simply a logical extension of Marx's views on the state. The correspondence between Marx and Lenin is here assumed to be direct and uncomplicated. As Polan puts it,

> the subject of my argument will be Lenin, not Marx. Such a substitution might ordinarily evoke a protest from those who consider that Leninism is but one of the many possible versions of Marxism, and in itself not the most legitimate. But in the area I shall be discussing such a protest is perhaps weaker than it might otherwise be. For Marx endowed posterity with no other theory of the politics and government of socialist society than the commune-state; and Lenin incorporated into his politics the theory of the commune-state as elaborated by Marx, without additions and without omissions. Here, at least, there seems to be a process, not of revision or development, but of staightforward inheritance.[1]

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But in fact the theoretical picture is a good deal more complex than this. A textual analysis of the writings of Marx and Lenin on the state shows that there is a vast confusion in *The State and Revolution* between two quite distinct versions of the post-revolutionary state. Briefly, Marx deploys two very different models of this state: on the one hand, the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' model, elaborated around 1850 (a transitional phase, entailing centralised government, bureaucracy, and the persistence of politics), and the 'commune' model (to which Polan appeals), elaborated around 1872 (entailing the immediate abolition of politics, bureaucracy, and the state itself). Marx never equates the two accounts, nor does he repudiate the first account in its entirety. There thus remains room for argument within Marx's own Marxism as to which account is the more appropriate. It is **Engels**, writing after Marx's death, who collapses the two models into one:

> do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.[2]

Lenin took this seriously, and consequently was faced with the problem of making practical sense out of this conflation.[3] The theoretical difficulties he thus faced in writing *The State and Revolution* proved to be insuperable, and the sorry history of the Soviet Union derives in no small measure from this theoretical failure. It is thus not difficult to show that the account of the state and politics in *The State and Revolution* is hopelessly confused; Polan is not the first to have taxed Lenin on this score. But to pass from **that** conclusion to suggesting that what is at issue here is a failure of **Marxism** is illegitimate.

2. Strongly related to this is the second objection. It is this: on Polan's account, Marxism is by its very nature cut off from an adequate account of politics and bureaucracy, and against this lacuna it is useful to mobilise the arguments of Weber, who develops a very clear account of the uses and dangers of bureaucracy. Now, I think it is true that Marx's account of politics is inadequate. His works contains a profound tension between a powerfully expressed vision of individualism, and an equally powerfully expressed vision of human community, and the tension, it can be argued, becomes catastrophic in the absence of a clear account of how relations between individuals and their community are to be mediated. It is not at all clear from this, however, why **Marxism** should be taxed on this score. Presumably only the dullest of Marxists would want to treat Marx's every word as Holy Writ. In particular, it is not at all clear why we must turn to Weber and Polan for enlightenment when there is readily available to us the work of Karl Kautsky. It is Kautsky who is the first to argue —

explicitly against Lenin — that a bureaucratic state apparatus is indispensable to the workings of a modern industrial order, that the dictatorship of the proletariat could mean nothing other than the rule of the proletariat on the basis of democracy, that a class can rule but not govern, and therefore one needs a pluralistic political system to reflect the pluralism inherent even within the proletariat itself — in a word, one needs politics. It is Kautsky who argues that parliaments are the only effective means of exercising restraint and control over bureaucracies, and therefore that parliamentary institutions are absolutely indispensable in socialist society. It is Kautsky who anticipates the 'important theoretical insights', as Frost sees them, of Polan's argument — practically on the morrow the Russian Revolution.

In *Lenin and the End of Politics* there are four textual references to Kautsky, all to the theoretical part of the *Erfurt Programme* of 1891. The polemics with Trotsky and Lenin after 1917 — in which Lenin's treatment of the state was savagely attacked by Kautsky — are passed over in silence. The most charitable explanation for this extraordinary omission is ignorance of Kautsky's work, which is perhaps understandable in view of Kautsky's fate: to be cast into limbo by the triumph of the Bolshevik Revolution. It is only in recent years that there have been cautious attempts, particularly by the Eurocommunists, to rehabilitate him. Against all the odds, there is evidence enough that memory will overcome forgetting.

I think that it is incontrovertible that Leninism is a hopeless politics, precisely because it is an anti-politics. But the critique of Leninism has a long and respectable pedigree within Marxism itself, and the suggestion that an adequate rejoinder to Lenin must be cast in non-Marxist terms is false. In any event, one expects a critique to engage the **texts**; and in crucial respects, it is precisely this that Polan fails to do.

Duncan Greaves

University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.

NOTES

1.   Polan, A.J. (1984): *Lenin and the End of Politics* (London: Methuen) p. 7.
2.   Quoted in Harding, N. (1983): *Lenin's Political Thought* (London: Macmillan) Vol. 2, p. 91.
3.   The argument summarised here is set out fully in Harding (1983) Chapter 5. This study, awarded the Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize for 1981–82, is widely considered definitive. In a footnote Polan describes it as 'of some relevance' (op. cit. p. 54).